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KEIGHLEY HALL,
AND
OTHER TALES.



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OTHER TALES.

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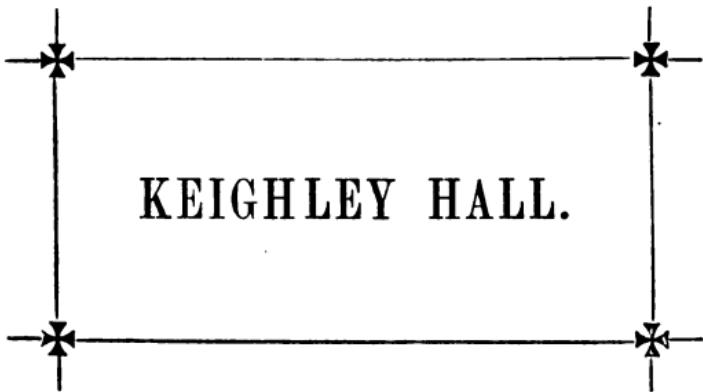
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KEIGHLEY HALL.

CHAPTER I.

“Now thanks to Heaven, that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.”

“LET us go and see the woodman,” said Mary Keighley to her maid, as they were starting for a ramble. “I do love that old man,” she added, as she stooped to pluck a primrose, the first wild flower she had seen that year, for it was an early spring morning. “I wonder why he lives there all alone, and where he goes to every Sunday.”

“Perhaps he will tell us the story of his life some day; for he says he has been many voyages, and must, therefore, have many adventures to relate,” replied her maid Annette.

“I do not think he will, Annette; for he never seems to like to speak about himself.”

When they reached the woodman's hut, and had tapped at the door for admittance, they found its occupant at home, with a little book in his hand which Mary longed to ask for and examine ; but there was something in the old man's manner that always repelled any attempt at inquisitiveness, something, too—rough and weather-beaten as were his features—that made many fancy that he had never been born to servile work. His hut stood at the entrance of a large forest, and there he had lived for the last three months, earning his living as a wood-cutter, seldom going into the neighbouring village, excepting to purchase the necessaries of life. How he came there, and why, and whether he would one day disappear as mysteriously as he came, was often the subject of gossip among the idlers in the village. Many asserted that they had seen him wandering at midnight in the forest, singing strange music, and some ill-natured people declared their belief that he dealt with evil spirits. Mary Keighley and Annette alone seemed to care for him, for they had reason to be grateful to him, he having once stood between them and an infuriated cow, which, however, instead of attacking him, lay down at his feet like a lamb. This, when related in the village, was attributed

to some power from the Evil One; for they knew not that the woodman had once saved the poor animal's young calf from drowning in a pond.

Mary's generous nature shrank from suspicion of any kind, and her grateful love for her preserver was unbounded. She had obtained leave of her father, who was lord of the manor, for the woodman to occupy the hut. It was no great favour, for it stood in so lonely a spot that no one would rent it. To the woodman, however, who wished to live as retired from the world as possible, and who had never known what fear was, it was a great boon. A table and two chairs, which he had made himself, a few cooking utensils, and a hammock, in which he slept, comprised nearly the whole furniture of the room. In a deep recess stood a wooden stool, and on the wall at the back hung an ancient-looking ebony crucifix, of foreign make. This was Mary's great attraction, whenever she came to visit the old man, and she often wished she could come without Annette, that she might just ask him why he hung it there and how he got it; for her nurse, although very grateful to the woodman for saving her life, was somewhat afraid of him, and had an unaccountable dread of looking at or of making any inquiry about

the crucifix. The world shrinks from the contemplation of the cross, and Annette was of the world. Mary, however, loved to look at the crucifix, although she knew not why; for she was too young to analyze her thoughts and feelings, and she had learned scarcely anything about God, or the world beyond the grave. She—the child of the lord of the manor—was almost as ignorant as a heathen about spiritual things. But God was teaching her: she was not left—none are left—without a witness of the things that concern our salvation.

"Good morning, Miss Mary," said the woodman, rising as she entered, and placing a chair for her. "You are early to-day."

"Yes," replied Mary, "I have been allowed to come out before study this morning, as the weather is so fine; for I have been kept in doors so much lately, on account of the heavy rains. Look! I have brought you a primrose."

"Thank you," replied the woodman. "It was my favourite flower when I was your age. Now sing me one of your little songs."

"Let us get outside, then," replied Mary, "for I cannot breathe in here. I should not live long in a cage, nor sing at all as mamma's poor canary does." And, seating herself on the trunk of a tree, she sang:—

“ O ladye, I am pining*
 With wild, free birds to fly—
 Upon light breezes to be borne
 To yonder azure sky.
 From a distant land they brought me,
 Where the sun shines always bright ;
 And they clipt the fleet wings, ladye love,
 That were given me for flight ;
 Then, ladye, if thou lovest me,
 O set me, set me free !

“ It is in vain, sweet warbler,
 To dream of freedom now,
 For death would be the price, poor bird,
 Should I the gift bestow ;
 The birds, whose lot you envy,
 But bitter foes would prove,
 And the wintry blast would kill thee soon,
 Far from my care and love ;
 So far too well I love thee,
 Poor bird ! to set thee free !

“ Sweet mistress ! gentle gaoler !
 I know thou lov'st me well ;
 But how galling is the captive's chain
 The free can never tell !
 I fear not cold nor tempest,
 Nor with cruel foes to fight ;
 Far worse than death this weary life,
 Oh ! I pant for one long flight !
 Then, ladye, if thou lov'st me,
 O set me—set me free !”

* “ The Captive Bird,” set to Music by the Author, can be had of R. Washbourne, for 13 stamps.

As the rich, clear tones of the child's voice died away, Annette thanked her, and clapping her hands, for she was very fond and proud of her young mistress, she begged for another song. But Mary did not sing again ; she saw that the woodman had fallen into a reverie, and that there were tears in his eyes ; so, beckoning Annette to follow her, she stole away and gathering some ferns, she presently returned, and holding them up, with the little primrose in front, she said, "This little wild flower looks quite lost among these dark ferns."

"Just as you are, maiden, in this huge forest. I often wonder what brings you here so often," replied the woodman.

"Just this," replied Mary, playfully, "the narrow path from the Hall to Beechley Forest is, to my mind, the pleasantest in the neighbourhood ; chiefly, perhaps, because it has a pleasant ending, for I see you Mr. Bennet."

"There is a path which you have not yet found out, which has a far happier termination than your favourite walk—the path to Heaven," replied the woodman. "Come into the hut, Miss Mary," added Bennet, and Mary followed him, seeing with delight that Annette was not within sight.

"Look there," continued the woodman, point-

ing to the crucifix, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

"Ah! I want so to know about that; there must be some sad story to tell about it, I am sure."

"Sad indeed, Miss Mary, when I tell you that, nearly two thousand years ago, the Son of God was nailed to a cross by wicked men that you and I, and everybody who does what God bids him, may go to Heaven; sad indeed, and yet joyful, for if the Son of God had not died, we should all suffer dreadful torments for ever."

"How very good!" said Mary, while tears stood in her eyes, "I have heard Annette say something about God and Heaven; and she taught me to say some prayers night and morning, but I have never heard about the Son of God. I wish I had an image like that, for then I should never forget what He did for us."

"It is called a crucifix, and it is meant to remind us of Jesus Christ."

"Is that the name of the Son of God?" replied Mary, earnestly. "I will try to remember it."

"Yes," replied the woodman; "and you must pray to Him that you may follow Him in the path that leads to a happier place than this forest. Don't forget, Miss Mary," he added, as

Annette entered the hut, looking anxiously at Mary and the woodman, and then at the crucifix, before which they were standing.

"No, I won't," whispered Mary. And she glided out of the hut with Annette.

The woodman stood at the door, watching their receding figures until they were out of sight.

"She is a beautiful barque, and will, I hope with a fair wind, get safe into port at last," sighed the old man. "How, like my mother—the same eyes! it was nearly all over with me, when she sang that song." And going in and fastening the door, he prayed long and earnestly for Mary.

CHAPTER II.

“ Nay, care not where
The messenger may come, if there
 He calls thee home,
And with glad welcome bids thee come,
Where mourners sorrow not again.”

H. A. RAWES, M.A.

“ WHERE have you been, Mary?” said Sir Reginald Keighley, as he met his daughter and her nurse returning from their walk.

“ To Beechley Forest,” replied Mary, timidly, for she had noticed lately that her father did not seem pleased when she spoke of the woodman.

“ Humph!” returned her father, “ one would think you must be tired of going there so often.”

“ Oh ! that could never be, papa ! it is the prettiest walk about here, and—and—”

“ Well, well, I know, you see the woodman ; but now you are growing older, you had better not go there so often. He is a rough sort of man, I hear, and, therefore, not very fit company for a young lady in your rank of life. Do you hear ?”

"Yes, papa," replied Mary, submissively ; for she feared if she seemed refractory that her father might forbid her going at all.

Sir Reginald was a stern-looking man, with markedly aristocratic features. No one could look at him without seeing that his mind was ill at ease, and there were few who did not fear him. There was one person, however, of whom *he* seemed to be afraid—it was his old housekeeper, who had lived in the late Baronet's family before the birth of the eldest son, who had died in her arms.

When Mary sought for any special favour from her father, she always got Mrs. Bradley to plead for her, and she rarely sought in vain. There was evidently no very kindly feeling between the Baronet and his housekeeper ; and sometimes, when they had been closeted for a considerable time in the library, she would come out looking flushed and angry, and the Baronet generally appeared gloomier than usual for the rest of the day. He would often on these occasions, order his horse, ride off alone, and not return for some hours. They had just had one of these interviews when he met Mary. "Strange," thought he, as he rode on, "tha she should care so much for that old man ; I believe she loves him better than her

father ; to be sure he saved her life, and I suppose he tells her all about his voyages and adventures, and the poor child has no companions of her own age and rank in life. I wish I could see him without his seeing me, but that would be almost impossible ; and it is all nonsense, Mrs. Bradley is getting imbecile—she is eighty-seven. I ought to have sent her out of the house and pensioned her off, and then I should not have been bored in this way. I believe he is dead, and the boy too."

Sir Reginald, thus lost in thought, had ridden on, and was surprised when he found himself close to the forest, and almost within sight of the woodman's hut. He was just about to turn his horse's head, when the sound of a man's voice, chanting, "In memoria æterna erit justus, ab auditione mala non timebit,"* arrested his attention. He could not stir : all he had heard about the woodman and the strange music came to his remembrance ; his head sank upon his breast, the reins fell from his trembling hands ; but his well-trained horse stood quite still—the sagacious animal knew that his master was in one of his melancholy moods. The chanter in the forest sang on, "desiderium peccatorum peribit."

* Psalm cxi. 6, 9.

"Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in
sæcula sæculorum. Amen. Alleluia."

Sir Reginald trembled from head to foot. Those words had haunted him ever since he had heard them in the church of St. Ouen, at Rouen, years ago, when a sailor who had knelt beside him had joined in the chant, the rich tones of his deep bass voice attracting him to look at the singer. That look had recalled the days of childhood, when he was happy and innocent; and a beautiful boy, older than himself, often sat at his mother's feet and sang hymns so sweetly that she often wept. The voice ceased, and all was still in that lonely spot, save the sound of the birds carolling and flitting from branch to branch among the trees. How gladly would the proud possessor of Keighley Hall have exchanged with them! A fierce war raged in his breast; he gathered up the fallen reins, wheeled round and galloped back to the Hall, shutting himself in the library, where no one dared to disturb him, not even Mrs. Bradley.

Mary, who had seen her father ride up the avenue on his return from the forest, saw that he was more than usually disturbed, and felt anxious when she heard that he had not

appeared at dinner. When she parted from her mother at night, she perceived that she, too, looked uneasy. She could not sleep ; she thought of her father, all alone in the library—so unhappy, although surrounded with every earthly comfort and luxury. Then she thought of the woodman, still more lonely, with barely the necessaries of life, yet so happy—so calm and peaceful. What was it that made this difference between her high-born and wealthy father, and the woodman of lowly birth and scanty means ? It must be something in themselves, she was sure : she believed she could be very happy herself in the forest, if the woodman would come and live with her in a nice little cottage covered with roses, like old Mrs. Stones', and the walls inside lined with pictures, provided also that she could take Annette and her pony, and a few little girls to play with her. But to live as the woodman did, quite alone in that rude hut, was very dreadful to think about.

As Mary lay thus thinking, she fancied she heard a noise ; it was only the wind whistling through the tall trees by which the Hall was surrounded. Why need she fear in that vast building full of people ? Yet she felt that she would have been braver in a time of danger in

the hut with the woodman and Annette than in the Hall.

The same noise again. "It cannot be the wind," thought Mary; "it is certainly in the house. Surely my father is not ill. I must go and see." So, dressing herself quickly, she flew down stairs to the library. To her horror she saw flames and smoke issuing from it—she tried to enter, to seek for the Baronet, but the fire was too fierce. She ran up stairs again to awaken Annette, but found her gone. Where, where could she be? Mary tried to retrace her steps, but the stairs were now impassable—smoke and flames were rapidly advancing. She would go back to her own room and pray. She thought of the crucifix, and of the woodman's words, "If the Son of God had not died, we should all suffer dreadful torments for ever." "For ever!" she repeated aloud, "O, my God, if I am to die now, for the sake of thy Son Jesus, let me not suffer for ever!" She heard the voices of many people on the lawn, her father's voice above the rest—"A thousand pounds to anyone who will save my child's life! My right arm is burnt and broken; I cannot carry her down if I could mount the ladder." No answer. Mary did not move—she would die there, on her knees, rather than go to the window. She trembled violently:

once, in her agony, she thought she would rather throw herself out of the window than remain there to be burnt. Then she remembered what Annette had once said about a man who had drowned himself—that he must be in torment for ever; and she tried to think of Jesus on the cross. The room which was over the library was filling with smoke; she heard the roaring of the flames, but, child as she was, she dreaded the judgment most, for she was not sure she might not “suffer for ever.”

Her eyes and lips are closed, for the smoke has almost blinded and choked her: her hands are clasped upon her breast—all will soon be over: the only child of the proud Sir Reginald, the rich heiress to the title and estates of Keighley will be laid in the dust like the poorest child in the village. On the lawn stands Sir Reginald: he looks pale as ashes, his lips are tightly clenched, some friends who are near him try to drag him away—he utters a fearful oath. “If she were only to appear at the window,” said some of the bystanders, “we would instantly risk mounting the ladder, but she is probably suffocated by this time.” At this moment a man, scarcely of the middle height, rushes through the crowd, seizes the ladder, mounts it like a squirrel—enters the window—

re-appears: there is a shout from the crowd—a crash—the flooring has given way—but Mary, wrapped in a blanket, is laid at the feet of her father, and he and his child's preserver stand face to face. Their eyes meet: Sir Reginald staggers—makes an effort to speak.

“Thank me not,” said the woodman, for it is he, “she is dearer than life to me;” and mingling with the crowd he is lost to sight in an instant, while Sir Reginald and Mary, who have both fainted, are carried to the house of the medical man in the village.

The fire was not extinguished until a considerable portion of the Hall was burnt to the ground.

CHAPTER III.

“ There are joys that come from sorrows,
The stars shine in the gloom,
The end of the journey is Heaven.
And life springs from the tomb.”

H. A. RAWES, M.A.

FOR days Sir Reginald lay at the point of death in the house of the medical man of the village ; his arm was broken in two places and much burnt. No one dared ask him the cause of the fire, but it was supposed that he had fallen asleep, and on awaking and finding the room in flames, he had escaped from the window.

A physician and surgeon from London were sent for immediately, but they both agreed with his usual medical attendant in pronouncing his case to be dangerous if not hopeless. To poor Mary the sad news was a far heavier blow than to Lady Keighley, for she really loved her father. Stern as he was by nature, he had always been kind and indulgent to her, and her affectionate heart quickly responded to the slightest touch

of kindness. Annette was deputed by Lady Keighley to inform her of her father's danger, and she did so as carefully as she could.

"I will not believe it, dear Annette," said Mary, after a violent fit of sobbing; Mr. Fielding is nervous—he always is, you know, such a croaker; he fancied I was going to die last winter when I had only a cold. I don't care what he says. I wish he would not come at all and papa might get better, for I am sure he frightens him with his long, pale face." And Mary, like most impetuous persons when they try to blind themselves to a painful fact, got quite angry with people who were not to blame.

Presently, after an effort to calm herself, she said, "Annette, will you go with me to the woodman?"

"Well, dear Miss Mary, I don't think her ladyship would approve of your going out just now; besides Sir Reginald might want to see you."

"Yes, I know that," replied Mary, "and I hope he will, for I want to be with him always until he gets better or—or—Do go," she continued after a pause and trying to check her tears, "and ask mamma if I may go out."

Annette left the room to do as her young mistress had requested her. She soon returned. "Lady Keighley," her maid told Annette, "was

quite upset, had said she must not be disturbed, as she must try to take some rest."

Mary sat quite still and silent for some time, then she arose and going up close to Annette she whispered, "If papa dies now he must suffer dreadful torments for ever; I must—I must—see the woodman."

"O, nonsense, Miss Mary, Sir Reginald has never done anything bad; he has been very cross to us all at times, to be sure, but he has given us good wages and we have been more comfortable than many servants. Don't fret so; indeed you must not," seeing Mary's tears were flowing fast, "it will be a happy release when he is taken, for he suffers dreadfully now."

"O, but it may be *for ever!* for he knows nothing about Jesus," and Mary's tears flowed faster and faster.

"Yes, but God is so merciful," replied Annette, still continuing to console her young mistress, whom she sincerely loved.

In her childhood, Annette had attended a Sunday-school, and she had learned her catechism—her duty to God and her neighbour—that Jesus Christ had died for her that she might go to Heaven if she put her trust in Him. But it had been but a dry lesson to her; and when, upon the birth of the heiress of

Keighley, she was engaged as under nurse, she soon forgot all she had learned, save that there was a God, and a world beyond the grave; that bad people would go to Hell, and that good people—according to her notion of good—would go to Heaven when they died. She was not bound to go to the parish church, which was five miles off, although she might have done so in the coburg with the few servants who chose not to forsake the assembling of themselves together. Thus, poor Annette had been daily losing the little she had learned at school; she did not, however, quite give up prayer, or rather, saying her prayers, and had taught Mary to say an “Our Father,” night and morning.

This was more than Mary’s governess, who came daily from a neighbouring town to instruct her for a few hours in the learning and accomplishments necessary in her rank in life, had done, Sir Reginald having bid her “leave religion alone, he did not wish any narrow-minded notions put into her head.” Mary’s words, therefore, “he knows nothing about Jesus,” had set Annette thinking about her early lessons, but her ideas on the subject had been so dim—she had had no firm belief in the teaching she received. And the Vicar’s ser-

mons had puzzled her as much as he was sometimes puzzled himself how to write them, harassed as he was with the cares of a large and unruly family, his wife having brought him a fortune, but no domestic comfort.

“ He knows nothing about Jesus, sure enough,” said Annette, at length, seeing that Mary was by no means satisfied.

“ No,” replied Mary, “ and now I tell you this,” and she got up and stood before her maid, “ if you will not risk mamma’s anger, I know who will. George will saddle Bruno for me, and he will come with me to the forest;” and with flushed cheek and flashing eye she moved towards the door.

“ Stop ! dear Miss Mary, if you love me. You know I should be disobedient, and that would be wrong, if I went, and took you also without leave ; so you would be making me do wrong.”

“ O ! how dreadful it is not to be able to do what we wish without leave. I feel often just like mamma’s poor canary-bird, only I can ask leave and Dickie cannot, and if he could he would not be allowed to quit his cage.”

They were now interrupted by a knock at the door of the room. It was Sir Reginald’s servant, who came to say his master wished to see Miss Mary directly. Mary flew to her

father's room, and quietly opening the door, she found him, to her surprise—alone. She was sensible enough to know, young as she was, that weeping would disturb him and make him worse, so she struggled with her tears, which were ready enough to fall when she looked at his haggard features ; and, kneeling down by the bed-side, she waited quietly until he should speak.

"Mary, you have been a good child, and I am sure that you will forgive me for anything I may have done that may have seemed harsh. You are a brave girl, too, for the blood of the Keighleys runs in your veins, and it is well that you are, for your courage may one day be sorely tried."

"O, papa!" moaned poor Mary. Still, she tried not to cry.

"You have always thought that you would be heiress of Keighley after my death, and so you may be ; but there is just a chance that you may not. It is my fault that you have been so far deceived, but you will forgive me ; I know you. And now I have a request to make, for I feel that I have not long to live ; and yet, I need scarcely ask you to do what I know will give you pleasure—what you would have done had I said nothing. You will be

kind to the woodman when I am gone. He has refused the sum I offered for your life on the night of the fire, and which I wished to double; but you will take care of him in the way he likes best—I need scarcely ask you. God bless you, Mary! Now go. I think I may sleep, for I am in less pain."

"O, dear, dear papa! I will do all you ask, and more. Oh! may I go to the woodman and bring him to you. He can tell you about Jesus, and then you will not 'suffer torments for ever.'"

"Ha!" said Sir Réginald, starting, "do you believe I shall suffer *for ever?*" Then, turning away his face, he continued, "nonsense child! I am right enough."

"O, dear papa," sobbed Mary, now fairly overcome, "let me fetch the woodman. He is so good, and he told me something the other day about God and Heaven, and about Jesus, the Son of God, who was nailed to a cross that those who did as God bid them might not suffer torments for ever. But for what he told me, I should have thrown myself out of the window on the night of the fire, and I should most likely have been killed."

"No earthly being, Mary," continued Sir Reginald, in a hollow voice, "could be of any

use to me now. God alone can help me. My mother used to speak of His love and mercy when I sat by her side as a boy, and, he—ah! stuff—he is dead, and the boy too, and I shall die, and you will also, Mary. I wish I were ready like the rest. Well, it is useless to try now; it is too late—too late; it will soon be all over with me: *Nosce te ipsum.* ‘Know thyself.’ ‘Know thyself,’ Mary; remember that, and try to know thyself whilst thou art young. I never knew myself till now, and it is too late—too late.”

“It is never too late to mend, dear papa,” replied Mary. “Oh! do see the woodman,” continued she, in a pleading tone; and, as Sir Reginald made no reply, she left the room, after ringing the bell to summon the nurse. Gently closing the door, she bid her send Annette to her immediately. In a few moments her faithful maid was by her side.

“You were right, Annette,” said Mary, who was ever ready to own when she had done wrong. “Now, make haste down to George, and tell him to go to the forest and bring Mr. Bennet here as quickly as he can. Papa is very bad. Pray—pray for him. Come back soon, and wait here outside until the woodman comes.”

In passing through a great trial, the girl often appears suddenly to become a woman, especially when she is unexpectedly deprived of the assistance of those whose place it is to act for her; so it was with Mary now. Lady Keighley, a fashionable and irreligious woman, was of course perfectly incapable of giving the least consolation to poor Sir Reginald.

“Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, O Lord,” and so, in his time of greatest need, his child—only eleven years of age—was the humble instrument whom Almighty God was using to bring the proud Baronet to plead like the publican, for “Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.”

Mary returned to her father’s bed-side, and kneeling down, she tried to pray; but her naturally impetuous nature could ill brook to wait. “Be still, and know that I am God,” was, therefore, a difficult lesson for her; she feared the woodman might be out, and then, suddenly, she heard the church bells chiming in the distance. They had always impressed her with a feeling of sadness, she scarcely knew why. They sounded more mournful than ever to-day. Presently, to her dismay, she remembered that they were chiming for afternoon service—that it was Sunday, and that the

woodman was always absent on that day. It is well, restless, impatient child of earth! thou hast done all that God required of thee.

“ But they too, serve,” the blind bard spoke,
“ ‘ Who only stand and wait.’ ”

“ Nosce te ipsum,” murmured Sir Reginald,
are you there, Mary ?”

“ Yes, papa,” she replied, “ do you want anything ?”

“ Nothing that you can give me. Don’t leave me, unless you are tired. Have you sent for him ? for—you know ? ah me !”

“ Yes, papa, he will be here soon, I hope ;” but, poor child, she was hoping against hope, for it was most likely that the woodman would be far away when George reached the hut.

“ Hark ! there is the sound of horses’ feet—of the wheels of a light vehicle. They are come,” whispered Mary to her father, and going to the door, and beckoning Annette to come in and take her place, she glided swiftly down stairs—to the hall, where the woodman stood, and giving him her trembling hand, without saying a word, she was about to lead him up stairs, when she perceived that a stranger was standing in the hall, looking doubtful what to do.

"I have brought a friend with me, Miss Mary, may he wait here for me," pointing to an ante-room, "until I have seen Sir Reginald."

"Certainly," replied Mary, bowing low to the stranger, for there was something in his appearance that inspired her with an unaccountable feeling of reverence.

"God bless you, my child," replied the stranger, solemnly. "Peace be to this house," he added, as he followed the servant into the ante-room, who looked inquisitively at him as he retired.

"Sir Reginald wishes to see Mr. Bennet alone, and begs you will wait outside, within call, for a little while," said Annette to Mary, when she and the woodman had reached the door of the sick Baronet; and when she had opened the door and the woodman had entered, she gently closed it, and placing a chair for her young mistress—who had never seemed so dear to her as now—she knelt down and "begged that she would rest her head upon her shoulder, for she must be very tired."

"No, I am not tired now;" returned the energetic Mary. "Waiting so long, and in doubt about the woodman coming after all, made me feel tired a little while ago. Waiting

always tires me beyond anything ;—I suppose I am impatient.” Mary was beginning to know herself. She had now to endeavour to conquer the fault that she had discovered in herself, which, combined with her strong will and earnestness, was continually getting her into trouble.

CHAPTER IV.

He looks upon the Thorn-crowned Head;
That proud heart bends at last.
And now the penitential tears
Flow for the sinful past.

“BROTHER,” said Sir Reginald, in a hollow voice, as the woodman stood before him, “can you forgive me?”

“What have I to forgive?” said his brother—for such he was—kneeling down. “*You* did me no wrong.”

“So you think, Harry—so the world thinks, and so it will continue to think when I am gone—but *I know* that I wronged you and your boy, in thought, word, and deed, through my fault. Had I been true to myself and to you, brother, I should not lie here the miserable wretch that I am, only fit to be burned.”

“My dear brother,” replied the owner of the broad lands of Keighley—for such the woodman really was, as the elder brother of Sir Reginald—“I cannot forgive a wrong of which I know nothing. You are weak from illness, and this makes you fancy things that do not exist.”

"Ah, brother! it is too late to tell you all—too late! but when my father sent you to sea I was glad—glad that you did not return; and when my father died I took no pains to find out if you were alive, although I had every reason to doubt the vague reports of your death, and also of your child's. When you came to live in that hut I had many suspicions. I heard you chanting the other day, in the forest, the very words that I heard you chant in the church of St. Ouen, as I stood proudly by your kneeling figure, and I was sure that you were my elder brother—of whom, in my childhood, I had been so proud—the rightful owner of Keighley."

"But I did not come to claim my right upon the death of my father," replied his brother, "so that a strong temptation was thrown in your way. My rash vow not to return home until my father's death was at fault. May God forgive us both! I was proud and self-willed. I thought my father unjust in sending me to sea so young, especially as I should have preferred the army. The captain of the ship punished me unjustly. The blood of the Keighleys rose up—I struck him. With the aid of some of the crew—one of whom had been a tenant of my father's, and was attached to me—I escaped,

at night, from the ship, which was at anchor off the coast of Spanish America. I came home twice disguised as a pedlar ; saw you,—the tablet to my memory,—and knew that you believed me to be dead. So, when my father died, I could not bear to undeceive you. My wife—one of Spain's beautiful daughters—died—died of grief upon hearing, as you also did, that I had been murdered. My boy died. I had nothing left to live for. I made many voyages in merchant ships, but I will say no more of this. In the church of St. Ouen I found One to love, who had long loved me more than mother, wife, or child, although I knew it not. He loves you, too, brother.” And unbuttoning his coat, he drew from his breast the ebony crucifix. “Look, Reginald !” continued Sir Harry, as the sick man turned away and shuddered. “Turn not away from Him who bids you come. ‘Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you.’ ”

“But it would be cowardly to come now,” returned the sick man, mournfully. “Ah, Harry, you may forgive me—my generous, deeply-injured brother—but God cannot pardon such a wretch as I am. All I can do is to pay the penalty due to sin, and to die. ‘God be merciful to me a sinner !’ ”

"Amen," responded his brother. "God will be merciful to all who ask His mercy, and will forgive the sins of the penitent who seeks his pardon through those whom He has appointed to forgive sins in His name. I have brought a friend who will explain this better than the rough sailor who has passed his life upon the ocean."

"He may come up. Pray for me, Harry. If I could have faith in anything it would be in your prayers."

His brother went to the door, and bid Annette ask the stranger, who was in the ante-room to come to Sir Reginald. Annette hesitated ; she felt the same unaccountable dread of the stranger as of the crucifix. Mary was instinctively drawn to him, and seeing her maid's confusion, she glided quickly down stairs, and, in a few minutes, returned with the stranger, and led him into her father's room.

"You promise that you will not betray who I am," whispered his brother to Sir Reginald. "Father Lawrence, Sir Reginald would speak with you alone ;" and taking Mary by the hand, he led her out of the room, and bidding her go to her own room with Annette, promising to call her in case she was required, he stationed himself outside the door. His great fear was that his brother, at the last, might say some-

thing that might lead to the discovery of his real rank, which he was particularly anxious to avoid.

In about half-an-hour Father Lawrence opened the door.

"Your brother has fainted," he said; "you had better summon the doctor."

Mr. Fielding was by the bedside in a few minutes, and restoratives being administered, the sick man revived a little.

"Go away," he faintly murmured to the doctor; "don't call Lady Keighley, it would disturb me just now. Poor soul! Is Mary here?"

Yes, she was there. She had heard her father's door open, and was by his side in an instant, struggling with her tears, and trying to look brave, for she had caught sight of the crucifix. Her uncle saw the look, and taking it up and kissing it, he presented it to Mary. She kissed it tenderly: then looking wistfully at her father, and then at our incognito, she whispered, "Does he know all about Jesus, now? I think he does for he looks so happy."

"Yes," replied her uncle.

"Then I can bear to see him die," she said.

"You forgive me all?" said the sick man, looking pleadingly at his brother, and then at

Mary, and then, kissing the crucifix that was offered to him by Father Lawrence, his lips moved : he was praying—they were all praying ; even poor Annette, terrified as she was, in a corner of the room—while Father Lawrence proceeded to administer the last Sacraments to the sick man. Then, kneeling down, he said :

“ Let us pray.”

“ Lord God Almighty ! who hast spoken by Thine apostle, James, saying : ‘ Is any sick among you ? let him bring in the priests of the church ; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord : and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up ; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.’ Cure, we beseech Thee, Thy servant who is sick : heal his wounds, and forgive his sins ; drive out from him all pains of body and mind, and mercifully restore him to full health, inwardly and outwardly, that being recovered by the help of Thy mercy, he may return to his former duties. Who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest world without end. Amen.”

After saying a few more prayers, Father Lawrence arose, and asked the woodman, in a low tone, if it would not be better to summon Lady Keighley now.

"No," said the sick man, who had overheard him, "I wish to be alone with Mary, who can sit by me, if she is not tired."

Mary "was not tired," and sitting down by the bedside, as they all left the room, she took her father's cold hand in hers, and resolved to wait patiently for Him, who might give her her heart's desire, and restore her father to health. It was a still and solemn time, and made an impression upon Mary that was never effaced in after life. That her father must die, she felt almost certain. There was, however, something so solemn in the Sacraments which had just been administered, although she knew nothing about them, that she could not doubt that her father would escape the eternal suffering after death, which before she had so feared would be his portion from what the woodman had said about Jesus and the crucifix. So she sat watching her father—calmly and patiently—the tears now and then flowing silently until he fell asleep. "Was he really asleep?" She thought she had read in books of sick people going to sleep and never awaking again. His hand felt very cold; she was beginning to feel afraid, but she looked at the crucifix which her uncle had placed so as to be seen by the sick

man, and the little watcher grew braver,
although she still wept.

Ah! say not childhood's tears are nothing !
At the time they were more than the young
heart well could bear.

CHAPTER V.

“MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.”

WHEN George had reached the forest, he found the occupant of the hut, for whom he been sent, was out as he had expected—it being Sunday, when the woodman was always said to disappear.

“Ah!” he muttered to himself, “I thought so. Strange where he goes to! Only Miss Mary’s bidding would have brought me into this dreary place. He saved her life to be sure, bless her! I’d have saved it too, if—ir’s the rock to good intention to be sure. Well, I’d have saved it! and many would too, that night, if she’d have just shown herself, bless her! at the window. It’s hard to do a great thing, when one is next to certain not to succeed.” So he soliloquized as he returned to the village, where he thought he might discover from some of the gossips whither the woodman went

on Sundays. “Some one,” he imagined, “must have made the discovery by this time.” He went first to the old post-mistress, as being the most reputed gossip in the neighbourhood. She had, of course, found out all about “Mr. Bennet’s odd doings,” on the Sunday before the night of the fire at Keighley Hall, but she did not say much openly about one who had twice saved the life of the heiress of Keighley. Ah! Mrs. Busybody, those “odd doings” would not be condemned if you knew all that had passed during the last few hours at the doctor’s house but even your prying eyes will never discover the truth, for only three men are in the secret, and one is a priest.

The poor old lady was, therefore, in a great fume when George drove up and inquired if she could give him the least idea whither the woodman went on Sundays.

“Well, la, come in, Mr. George,” she replied, stroking her chin, “sit down a bit.”

“Oh! I can’t; I’m in a great hurry,” replied George, without stirring from his seat in the dog-cart.

“But I can’t tell you out there, you simpleton,” replied Mrs. Busybody, getting very red and angry, “I’m sure Miss Mary would not like to have proclaimed upon the house tops where

Mr. Bennet goes on Sundays ; it's a fearful thing. I don't know what will become of us all ; the times are getting something awful," and the old lady, trembled like an aspen leaf, and so did the white satin bows in her Sunday cap. "But come in," she continued, "if you're in a hurry," seeing George was inclined to drive off, "come in, and I'll tell you all in a minute."

Mrs. Busybody's minute seemed an hour to George, who wished to do his young mistress's bidding, and take the woodman as quickly as possible to the Hall. The post-mistress, however, like most gossips, was very voluble when speaking ill of anyone whom she did not fear, but when the person was somewhat above her mark—and the woodman certainly was just now—she spoke cautiously, and in a low and gentle voice. So she began, seating herself in her easy chair, and bending slightly forward, with her hands on her knees, "Well you see,—come a little nearer,—I can't speak loud about such serious things you know."

"I tell you what," roared George, impetuously, "if you don't out with it at once I'll be off to some one else, for I'll be bound if you know where Mr. Bennet goes on Sundays, the whole village does, even if you only knew it half-an-hour ago. I expect your tongue will get you

into trouble in this world, and the next too if you don't mind. Now out with it, or I'll be off."

Poor Mrs. Busybody was fairly frightened : still she was intensely delighted to think that she had really a very dreadful fact to state; so, going up to George, and putting her mouth close to his ear, she whispered quickly, as if the words burnt her lips,—“ he goes to the Catholic chapel.”

“ Ha ! ha ! ha ! ” roared George, “ why you'll be kidnapped some day, old lady, and we shall lose your services as post-mistress, gossip, &c. Keep your new secret, or they'll have you as sure as I'm George Brown. Ha ! ha ! I could laugh the whole way to —— if Miss Mary were not in such trouble, bless her ! ” and off he went as fast as the fleetest horse could take him.

“ Ah ! well, ” muttered Mrs. Busybody, “ he may laugh as much as he likes, but maybe they'll kidnap *him*, and worse than all, Miss Mary, for I believe she cares more for that old crazy man than her father, and if he dies, there's no telling what will become of us all. It's fearful to think of it.”

It seems that a letter had been mis-sent to the post-office at Keighley, directed to “ Mr. Bennet,

care of Father Lawrence, Catholic Chapel, —.” This had given the post-mistress a clue to the secret of his disappearance on Sundays, and she determined to have ocular demonstration of the fact of his going, as she suspected, to the Catholic chapel. So she got the letter-carrier to drive her over to post town of ——, and there they saw Mr. Bennet, in cassock and cotta, on the altar, devoutly assisting the “High Priest,” as they called the celebrant. They nodded and winked at each other during the whole service, behaving, however, more reverently during the sermon, for it was on Christian charity, and they were not inclined to sleep, as was their custom in the high, square pews in the parish church at Keighley.

When Mrs. Busybody had watched George out of sight, going in, she sat by the window, not venturing even to get up to make her tea, anxiously awaiting the return of the dog-cart, which she knew must pass through the village on its way to Keighley, and as it dashed past, and George flourished his whip, to her horror she saw that there were three men in it, and that one was—ay, she was sure of it—the Catholic priest.

CHAPTER VI.

“ The years go by in chariots,
Part forest and fruitful tree,
Part desert, and meadow, and mountain,
And rivers, in heat and cold :
As they go they gather their record,
One day to be unrolled :
But the silent watcher standeth
At the gate of eternity.”

H. A. RAWES, M.A.

THE woodman, for such we must still call him, and Father Lawrence, who had agreed to wait at the doctor's until the sick man should become better or worse, began to be alarmed that they had not been summoned by Mary to the sick room. They agreed therefore, to go up and just quietly look into the room. The invalid and his little nurse had both fallen asleep. Mary's head reclined upon the back of the prie-dieu upon which she was sitting. The shadow of early sorrow rested upon her young brow, her long dark eye lashes were still wet with her tears, and one had fallen on her little dimpled

cheek. Her right hand was still fast locked in her father's, whose worn and haggard features were in striking contrast to those of the little sleeper by his side.

"One could almost wish" said her uncle, as he and Father Lawrence slipped quietly out of the room, "that they might never wake until the Judgment Day if my little niece were also received into the 'One Fold.' "

The sick man slept on for hours ; he had not slept so sweetly for years. When, at last, he awoke, he was so much better, that poor Lady Keighley summoned courage to pay him a visit, and Father Lawrence returned to his mission, promising to call again the next day. To the surprise of every one, the invalid gradually recovered. By Mrs. Busybody and the village gossips, his restoration to health was attributed to magic, especially as Father Lawrence paid almost daily visits to Keighley Hall, whither the invalid was removed as soon as it was considered safe to do so ; and when Sir Reginald was able to leave the house George drove him and Mary and Annette to the Catholic chapel, taking up on their way the occupant of the hut, whom no entreaties could induce to leave the forest. On their return through the village, George, instead of as before flourishing his

whip and grinning at Mrs. Busybody, breathed a fervent prayer for the old lady's conversion. She now for once muttered the truth as she peeped at the carriage over the blind of her parlour window: "they had positively kidnapped Miss Mary, the Baronet, and their faithful maid, and groom besides." Not a year afterwards the little post-mistress was fairly caught herself, and not having forgotten the first sermon she had heard in the chapel on Christian charity, she was seldom known to sin against that greatest of virtues for the rest of her life.

A short time after these events, the supposed woodman disappeared as the gossips had predicted, as mysteriously as he had come there.

Poor Mary was often seen in tears, and for a time she drooped under the weight of her grief at his departure, but early sorrow was preparing her for great and responsible work in after years. The path to Beechley Forest was her favourite walk, where she often sought the woodman's hut, as it was always afterwards called. Leaving Annette in the forest to gather ferns, and hanging the ebony crucifix in its old place, she would pray long and fervently, never forgetting Brother Xavier, the name by which the woodman had bidden her in future to remember him. He wrote to her now and then,

and his letters were treasured up by her as the miser does his gold.

When Mary became of age, Sir Reginald related to her the history of his brother's life, telling her how generously he had relinquished his claims to the title and estates of Keighley, but, above all, how nobly he had given up, for the love of God, the comfort he might have had in the decline of life in the society of a brother and a niece whom he tenderly loved.

"He is now," said Sir Reginald "a poor monk in a monastery in India, teaching little children as he once taught you, Mary, to love our crucified Lord. He accounted for his mysterious appearance on the day when you and Annette were attacked by the cow. It seems he was one of the crew who escaped from the wreck of the mail packet, 'Phœnix,' which you may remember was wrecked off the coast of Hampshire a few days previously. Finding himself so near home, and believing he would never be recognised by any one, he felt a strong desire to revisit it, as he had done in disguise twice before. His rencounter with you and the cow occurred the day after he had saved the calf from drowning, having slept in the hut on the preceding night. The desire to be, by the grace of God, instrumental in your conversion, induced him to

ask permission to live in the hut, never intending to discover himself to me, and feeling confident I should not remember him if we met ; nor should I but for one or two coincidences, and Mrs. Bradley's constantly affirming her belief in what she considered an authentic report of Harry's being still alive in India. She loved him more than any of us. The rest you know, and what a blessing he was to us all."

"I do, indeed," returned his daughter, "and I pray that, by the help of Almighty God, I may be enabled to carry out some of the plans for the conversion of souls which he would, we know, have put in execution had he been in our place here."

Sir Reginald had done all he could to make reparation for his former life. Among other good works, he built a church in India, another in the post town of ———, and a handsome chapel was added to Keighley Hall, in rebuilding that portion of it which had been destroyed by the fire. He died after a long and painful illness, two years after Mary had attained her majority. She tended him with loving care to the last, and Father Lawrence, a second time, administered the last Sacraments to the dying man. His end was peace.

Brother Xavier died a few months after

Sir Reginald. Lightly esteeming the honours of this fleeting world, in the life to come he will rank with those who "followed the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, having His name and the name of His Father written in their foreheads," who sing—

The song no mortal tongue can learn,
Heaven's glorious melodies.

Lady Keighley, who was many years younger than Sir Reginald, married again, and this left Mary in quiet possession of Keighley Hall. Her long life was devoted to the service of Him to whom in childhood she had given her whole heart, and whom Brother Xavier had taught her to love more than earthly friends, tenderly as she loved them. God was her All in All. His poor she especially loved. She built and endowed almshouses for the aged, schools and orphanages for the young, and churches for all where the "Daily Sacrifice" was offered. At her death, the title and estates devolved upon a distant male relative, whom she had been instrumental in converting to the Faith; and who, together with his wife and children, was a blessing to the neighbourhood, even as she had been.

Mary died a most happy death, after some months of great bodily suffering—longing to go; but having learned to "know herself,"

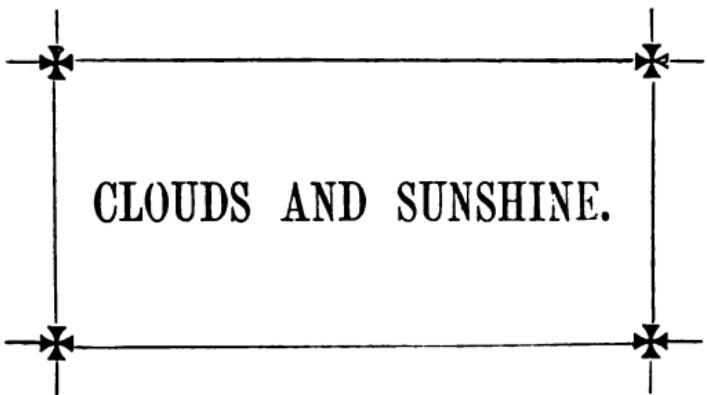
“waiting patiently for Him” who would, at the last day, give her heart’s desire—rest in Him for ever.

With Father Lawrence and Mary died the secret of the woodman’s three months’ sojourn in Beechley Forest. Even Mrs. Bradley paid the debt of nature without discovering that he was no other than her “dear master Harry,” but not without embracing, after many struggles with her prejudices, the Catholic Faith.

George and Annette died a few years before their beloved mistress. Their affection for her increased with their love for God, and devotion to His Holy Church.

They had all learnt their first lesson of love from the old ebony crucifix. They will not be ashamed when “this sign of the cross shall appear in the heavens, when the Lord shall come to judge,” and to “render to every man according to his works.”

R. I. P.



CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CELLAR.

IN one of those miserable under-ground rooms, which are little better than cellars, sat—or rather crouched—round their evening meal, a poor widow and her three children, who were all young; but they could scarcely be called children—they never played—never laughed. The mother, too, was young—only thirty-two; but there were deep lines in her care-worn face, and her slender form was sadly bent. Sally, the eldest girl, was thirteen; Meggie—sturdy little Meggie they used to call her—was one year younger; Milly, the youngest—whose large forehead, shaded with yellow, silky curls, indicated water on the brain—was scarcely six years old. Three babies, with that same beetling

forehead, and with sunny locks, rest in the church-yard in their native village; but they are not forgotten: the poor widow remembers well the date of the birth, death, and burial of each. Want has not deadened her feelings; but she would not call them back now; she might have been often tempted to do so, had she still been in her cottage by the mill-stream, but not there, in that dark, dismal place, where the damp oozed in large drops from the dirty walls. Not there! Oh, no! she was not a selfish mother, and she must have been something worse if she had wished to see more than those three sitting there; yet she shrank from the thought of parting from any of those who had been left to share her sorrow and poverty, much as the sight of their sufferings added to her anguish. How they all loved each other, in that dreary room! where the sun never shone, and the light struggled to pierce the thick gloom through the barred window. A box served for a table, and two others served as chairs; a flower pot, turned upside down, was always regarded as Milly's seat. There was no fire-grate; fortunately it was summer, and they hoped—poor souls! it was well they could hope—to get into better quarters for the winter. A straw palliasse lay in one corner

of the room, close to the reeking wall ; in another corner stood a pan filled with flowers, which might have cheered them to look at, but for the sad thought that they were unsold, and might be too faded to be saleable in the morning. No one had been near them during the three long weary months that they had lived there—no district visitor, no sanitary inspector, for cholera and fever were not raging just then. There they sat, eating some dry bread and drinking a most unpalatable beverage made from boiled tea leaves, which had been given to them by the lodger in the ground-floor-back, who had received them from a lady for whom she worked. The poor often help each other, for kind acts frequently spring from sympathy, and the continual sight of suffering does not blunt the feelings in those who are enduring the same kind of trial.

“I say, Sally,” said Meggie, “you don’t sell as many flowers as I do cresses.”

“Because she can’t walk as far as you do. She isn’t so strong as you,” replied her mother.

“Yes, but as many people would go by her as go by me, if she were to sit down on a door step ; so she’d sell as much.”

“Ah ! but no one buys of people sitting down—they’re looked upon as lazy beggars.

Behind counters in shops they never sit down," replied Sally, mournfully.

"I think I sell less than any of you," sighed the poor mother. "We must hope for better times before winter. I wish I had never left Standon. Oh, if I could only get back there, and die!"

"Oh! don't talk of dying, mother," said Meggie, trying to look cheerful. "Winter's a long way off yet, and before then we may get a helping hand to lift us up into a ground-floor-back,"—the height of poor Meggie's ambition,—"and we can all make lace and pin-cushions again. If somebody would give us a mangle I think I could turn it."

"Sally touldn't, nor I touldn't," sighed little Milly.

"Nor could mother neither," added poor Sally.

Poor Sally! she had always been ailing, especially since they left their native village, a year before our narrative commenced. But she was not in a consumption, so her illness did not excite so much commiseration as is the case with a disease that must end fatally. Yet hers would be life-long, and want of proper nourishment was daily aggravating it. The pain she suffered, too, was excessive.

"We had better go to bed," said Mrs. Smith, "for we must be up before five to get to Covent Garden Market to buy the flowers." So she and poor Sally, and the youngest, lay down on the straw palliasse in the corner, and Meggie stretched herself on the bare ground, and dreamed—not of flowers—but of mangling and lace-making in a ground-floor back room.

CHAPTER II.

THE MANSION.

FROM the dry and well-stocked cellars in a mansion in Belgrave Square, we will proceed to the kitchen department, where busy servants are constantly preparing delicious viands. Glancing at the luxuriously-furnished dining and reception rooms, we will peep into the schoolroom and see what the juvenile members of the family of Mr. and Mrs. Parkhurst are doing there. What a paradise it looks after that dark dreary cellar in the dirty back street where the poor Smiths are living! There are three children also in the mansion.

“Georgy, how badly you are holding your pen, and you are stooping dreadfully,” said his governess, who was teaching him to write.

“I don’t care—I shall do as I like,” replied Master George Parkhurst, a boy about eight years of age, trying to pull Miss Morton’s hair.

She warded him off as well as she could ; she dared not punish him—he is the only boy.

“Augusta,” said Miss Morton, when her struggle with George was over, “I wish you would set your brother a better example. Remember you are four years older, and really ought to know better.”

“I shall do as I choose,” returned her eldest pupil, proudly, “you are appointed to teach me, not to preach sermons.”

“You should not speak so to Miss Morton, for she is so kind,” said Lily, a little affectionate, but very restless and troublesome child, and throwing her arms around her governess’s neck, she devoured her with kisses, causing her as much bodily suffering as George’s attack upon her hair had done. But she loved Lily ; indeed she was the only tie that bound her to the Parkhurst family ; she hoped, by remaining, to win her to love her in return, and thus to influence her future life.

Of Augusta and George she had little hope. Proud, and intensely selfish, the fear of punishment could alone induce them to obey her, and whenever she ventured to correct them, they complained to Mrs. Parkhurst, who invariably reprimanded her before the children, never allowing her to clear herself, however unjust

and improbable the accusation against her might be. As she sat alone during the long evenings, when the children were gone to bed, she would sometimes give way to sad regrets about her early home, when she was one of a happy family, the pet and darling of them all ; when kind friends spoilt her—so she thought now—and made her feel more keenly the unkindness, and worse than all, the cold contempt she met with in her new position as governess in the family of Mr. Parkhurst, the rich merchant. Reading, which had once been one of her chief pleasures, was now often wearisome to her ; she found in needle-work the greatest relief from the distracting thoughts that would come thick and fast, during those long, long evenings. So she made clothes for the poor, and sent them to a friend who lived in her native village, who distributed them amongst her “ dear people ” there, as she always called them. Mr. Parkhurst was a proud man, and although he gave nothing in alms, excepting in the shape of donations to some public charities, he paid well those whom he employed. Miss Morton had, therefore, a handsome salary, and this enabled her to exercise her natural benevolence.

“ God bless her ! ” the old people would say, as some warm garment was given them through

her friend, "she said she'd never forget us, and she hasn't." "Do you think she'll ever come back to die?" said old Molly McCroe, "for it's the thing she wanted, but it's to come back to live long, that we all wish. The blessing of God on her beautiful head! and it's the beau-ti-fulest I ever seed, saving an angel's, which I never seed, at all, at all, saving in a picture, and maybe it wasn't a true likeness after all."

CHAPTER III.

THE STREET.

“COME, Miss Lily, don’t fidget so, I shall never get you dressed,” said her maid, “and Miss Morton is waiting in the schoolroom, and Master George is bothering her so, and pulling her hair ; come, be quiet for once ! ”

Lily tried to be quiet; and when dressed, she and her maid Mary descended to the schoolroom, where they found Miss Morton still struggling to conquer George. Mary seized his hand, and Miss Morton taking Lily’s, they were soon in the square, at the corner of which Lily suddenly tried to spring away from Miss Morton, saying,

“Oh ! do let me catch that little girl, and buy some flowers.”

“We shall reach her presently without running,” returned Miss Morton, whose arm was nearly pulled out of its socket.

“Holloa ! you little monkey,” roared George,

as he escaped from Mary, "I'll send you over-board if you don't stop," and running against her with great violence, the little girl he was chasing fell on the pavement.

"You naughty boy! what have you done?" said Miss Morton, who came up with Lily at the same moment. "Poor child!" she added, tenderly raising her from the ground, "you have cut her lip. Do not cry, dear child; where do you live?"

"In de cellar, at No. 1, —— street," sobbed little Milly, for it was she.

"You're a story-teller," replied George, "nobody lives in cellars; that's where people keep coals and wine."

"No it ain't a story. Mummy!" she cried, "mummy!" wiping her mouth with her frock. "O, mummy!"

"Here I am," said Mrs. Smith, who had been selling flowers round the corner, and had only just heard her child's piteous cries. "Oh! what has happened? Oh, dearie, don't cry!"

"I am very sorry," said Miss Morton, "this young gentleman accidentally threw the little girl down. Take her home as soon as you can. What is your address? I will try if I can call and see you, but I cannot promise," and she slipped half-a-crown into her hand.

"Oh ! Miss Mor——," cried Mrs. Smith, then checking herself, as she perceived Miss Morton looked surprised, she curtseyed, and thanking her, she gathered up the fallen flowers, and was leading poor Milly away, when Mary ran after her, saying, "the lady wished for her address," Mrs. Smith coloured, and gave it, saying, "she hoped the lady did not think her ungrateful, but it was such a place for a lady like her to come to."

"Oh ! she won't mind that," answered Mary, "for she's a *real* lady, and no mistake, only you mustn't mind if she don't come, for my mistress may not let her ; perhaps she'll send one of the men servants."

Mrs. Smith went home with Milly, for her lip was much cut, and the loss of blood and the fright had made her feel faint, while the wound still continued to bleed. After dressing her lip, and giving her a little milk, which she purchased together with a few necessaries, out of Miss Morton's half-crown, for she had sold nothing that morning, she laid the poor child on the paliasse, and then went out to try to sell her flowers.

George seemed rather ashamed of himself as he walked home. Mrs. Parkhurst met them on their way to the schoolroom.

"What have you been about George?" she said anxiously, as she observed some spots of blood on his collar.

"Oh! it's nothing," he replied, trying to tear himself away from her grasp.

"He pushed a little girl down who was selling flowers, and cut her lip; and it bled so fast, mamma. I wish you would let me go and take her something nice after dinner," said Lily.

"Oh! is that all," said Mrs. Parkhurst, coldly; "how did it happen, Miss Morton?"

Miss Morton related the occurrence.

"Ah! I see. I do not suppose the child was hurt, but these kind of people generally make a fuss about anything of this sort. You can send this by one of the servants," and, giving Miss Morton a sovereign, she walked away.

When the children were gone to bed, Miss Morton, who had leave to go out in the evening, provided she returned before dark, determined to take the sovereign to the poor woman herself; she had missed her visits to the poor since her residence at the Parkursts', for she really loved them, for in them she saw the representatives of Him who was once cradled in a manger. She had not felt so happy, nor walked so lightly since she came to London, as she did that evening. Ah! Miss Morton, you

have seen *poverty* in the country village, and it is bad enough ; but you have not seen the horrors of *London pauperism* ! You will not see that now, even in this cellar ; but you will see something more than poverty. How many, who have enough and to spare ;—how many, who have wealth and time to bestow, hear of, but never *see* the gaunt, hollow-eyed monster—*Want*, and yet it exists, to a fearful extent, in one of the wealthiest countries in the world !

When Miss Morton had knocked at the door of the cellar, a faint voice bid her enter. With difficulty pushing open the door, which had but one hinge, she saw, to her dismay, the little flower girl, pale as death, lying on the palliasse, quite alone.

“ My poor little child ! ” said Miss Morton, kneeling down by her side ; “ was your poor lip so much cut ? Where is your mother ? ”

“ Se born to sell fowers, se no ere, Lady, se tome ome, I tink, soon,” sighed Milly.

“ Don’t talk, dear ; I will wait a little,” said Miss Morton kindly. She waited more than half an hour—she must return before dark—she must not remain much longer. At length the door opened, and Mrs. Smith entered.

“ Oh ! ma’am, this is kind to come here ! This will be a better seat,” seeing she was sitting on

the reversed flower pot, and offering one of the boxes.

"No, I like a low seat," said Miss Morton. "Don't let me disturb you, I will not wait now, for you must be tired. I fear," looking at her flowers, "you have not made much to-day."

"No ma'am, it's too hot; they fade so soon this weather, and everybody who can afford to buy, is too hot to go out."

"Ah! I see," replied Miss Morton; and then looking earnestly at Mrs. Smith, she said, "surely I have seen you somewhere before."

Mrs. Smith burst into tears. "Ah! Miss Morton!" she said at length, when she could speak, "I little thought ever to see you in such a place; and you, ma'am, have had sorrow too."

"Now, I remember you. You used to live at Standon, and I met you two or three times at your cousin Mary Smith's, who was paralyzed. And you remember me," said Miss Morton.

"Remember you! who could ever forget you, or your kindness? They don't any of them forget you at Welford, for I hear from Susan Smith sometimes. But you were all of you the same, papa and mamma, brothers and sisters; and,"—but she checked herself for she saw that Miss Morton's eyes were full of tears.

"Yes, they were good," faltered Miss Morton, "and I miss—I—but, it is well; I would not call them back. I must hope to go to them some day."

"You're sure to do that; ma'am," replied Mrs. Smith.

"You must not say that; we are none of us sure about anything; we know that God wills that all should be saved, and that it will be our own fault if we perish. But I must go now, and will call again very soon. Mrs. Parkhurst has sent you this to get anything your little girl may need," giving Mrs. Smith the sovereign.

"Pray, thank her, ma'am, but thank you above all for coming; there ain't many who would venture down this street, much less come into the houses."

Miss Morton hurried away; it always pained her to receive thanks. She knew, too, she was only doing her duty, to "visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation, and keep herself unspotted from the world."

CHAPTER IV.

THE " GROUND-FLOOR-BACK."

WHEN Miss Morton called on the Smiths the next evening she found Milly not so well, and looking very feverish.

" I fear she was more hurt than we thought," said Miss Morton, in a low voice to Mrs. Smith.

" No, ma'am, I think not ; you see I have never thought to rear her. The doctor at Standon said she had water on the brain."

" Ah ! and perhaps her head was struck yesterday. You must get out of this room at once—this place, I mean. Do you know of a tidy room, and what would be the rent ? "

" There is one, ma'am, in the next street, which is more respectable than this ; but the rent is three shillings, for it's a ground-floor-back," answered Mrs. Smith.

" Three shillings a week for a ground-floor-

back!" sighed her benefactress. "Take it," she added, "I will pay the rent."

"O, Miss Morton," sobbed Mrs. Smith, "it is too much;" but she could say no more; truly grateful people always find it difficult to express their thanks.

Milly was removed next day, and Meggie was in her glory; she had great hopes now, that, somehow, they would get a mangle before winter, and so they did. Miss Morton did not act upon impulse in the exercise of her charity. Her natural benevolence, yet instinctive horror at the sight of suffering, would have led her—especially if she had been rich—to give alms largely, according to her means, but to shrink from personally visiting the wretched abodes of the destitute, had she not early learned, in her happy and well-regulated home, to conquer self, and to imitate the example of Him "who went about doing good." She took up her cross daily, patiently continuing in that state of life in which she felt sure that God had placed her, esteeming nothing, by the help of His grace, too little nor too great to do for Him. She ventured to speak to Mr. and Mrs. Parkhurst about the Smiths, not merely to benefit the poor family, but in the hope of bringing the former face to face with the

want and misery that existed so close to their splendid mansion.

There are many who would relieve a distressing case, were it really placed before them ; but there are few who have the courage to plead for it, and Miss Morton was by no means brave in this respect ; she knew, however, she had a duty to perform to the Parkhursts—especially, as the instructress of their children, as well as to the poor ; and that, if, through her timidity, they should lack an opportunity of doing a good work, that she would be accountable to God. When, therefore, Mrs. Parkhurst came into the school-room after the children were gone to bed, as she sometimes did, to inquire about their progress, Miss Morton ventured to speak to her of the Smiths.

“O, that miserable little flower-girl, you mean. George did not hurt her, I should think ; she was in a sickly state of health before, no doubt. The poor are so dirty, and they drink so, that there is no wonder that they are always ill and poor. I am sure the poor’s rates are enormous, and yet these paupers would empty our purses if we were to give to them all.”

“Yes,” replied Miss Morton, “but you will pardon me if I plead for the mother of this child. I knew her cousin at Weldon, and I

believe her to be a most respectable woman. Unfortunate circumstances—commencing with the death of her husband—have been the cause of her poverty, as she fully explained to me the other evening; and so it is with many, I believe, in this populous city," sighed Miss Morton.

"Well, I am not inclined to argue the point with you," replied Mrs. Parkhurst, pettishly, "it certainly makes one groan to think of the filth that is around us, and is continually breeding cholera and fever, and that one has no power to do anything in the matter—at least, poor, weak women, like ourselves, have not, certainly."

"Still, dear madam," argued Miss Morton, "if each weak woman were to do what *is* in her power in the narrow circle in which she moves, want and misery would be much lessened; anyhow, for our soul's sake, we are bound to give alms, for the love of God."

"O, if you get upon religion, Miss Morton, I must be off," replied Mrs. Parkhurst, hastily. "You know that is a point upon which we never agree. I will, however, send you in a cheque for ten pounds, and you can lay it out as you like for these people's benefit, and I will give you credit for doing it judiciously. I should not

like it to be said that they had suffered through the fault of any child of mine. I am half afraid, however, to let you go to these people,—you may bring some horrible fever into the house."

"O, do not fear, dear madam," replied Miss Morton, anxiously, "the room they are now in is clean and tidy, and the poor child's illness is water on the brain."

"Well, I know you are careful and judicious," replied Mrs. Parkhurst, with a patronizing smile, for she sometimes feared Miss Morton might give up the charge of her children, and she really valued her services; "but I own, I feel very nervous about your going to these dreadful places."

"I promise you, madam, I will be careful; and I feel sure you will never regret giving me permission to be your almoner," returned Miss Morton, gaily, and, when Mrs. Parkhurst had left the room, she hastened to the Smiths to tell them of their good fortune. She found little Milly looking paler and weaker, but very patient.

"How good of you," said Meggie—for Mrs. Smith was out—"to come again so soon!"

"No, not at all," returned her kind benefactress; "the fact is, Mrs. Parkhurst has

given me ten pounds to lay out for your benefit, and I came to consult with your mother about it."

Meggie's "Oh! Miss Morton!" while the colour mounted to her cheeks, and her eyes glistened with delight and gratitude, expressed far more than the most eloquent thanks could have done. She would have fairly danced, but for her reverence for Miss Morton, and her dread of disturbing Milly. At length she said, timidly, "Do, you think, ma'am, the lady gave enough for a mangle?"

"Meggie! how rude of you to ask questions," said Sally, colouring at what she considered her sister's forwardness.

"Nay, do not scold her," said Miss Morton; "she is naturally anxious to know, on your account and Milly's. Yes," she continued, turning to Meggie, who had slipped behind her chair; "you can get a mangle; but, I fear you will be the only one who will have strength to turn it."

"I tould'nt, nor Sally," said little Milly, looking wistfully at her fragile-looking sister, and then at Miss Morton, who could scarcely restrain her tears as she looked at the three sisters, and compared their affection for each other with the coldness that existed between

the members of the Parkhurst family. Meggie, with the prospect of her mangle in a ground-floor-back, was certainly much happier than Augusta Parkhurst, with her harp and piano in Belgrave Square.

"Well, Mrs. Smith," said her friend, as the former now entered the room, and, putting down her basket, curtseyed to her, "Mrs. Parkhurst has kindly sent me to arrange with you about getting a mangle and some of your things out of pledge, so that you may be able to do something more profitable than selling flowers."

"Oh! dear Miss Morton, I will own to you now, it has been a hard time with us since we left Standon, but I hope we've turned the corner now. I only fear I must lose her," looking at Milly, and wiping the hot tears that fell from her eyes, with the corner of her apron.

"I will send the doctor who attends the Parkhursts, to-morrow; he is a kind and good man, and we shall see what he says about her," replied Miss Morton.

"Thank you, ma'am, you are too kind; and I should be too happy, but for the dread of losing Milly," whispered the poor woman; "and for Sally being so delicate."

"So it is with most of us in this world, we should rest here if we had no cross. Our home is beyond the grave, and each beloved one, who dies saved, will one day welcome us in Heaven, if we should ever get there."

"Who dies saved!" echoed Mrs. Smith.
"Surely my Milly will be saved."

"That little lamb is too young to have committed a sin that could condemn her to eternal punishment," returned Miss Morton.

"Ah! I do not know much about these things, ma'am; I'm a poor, ignorant woman."

"So we all are until we are taught," replied Miss Morton.

"O, ma'am, I should just tell you that a Sister of Charity—a nun they say—called yesterday; she came to see the people who had this room before us, so I asked her to sit down a bit, and she talked so beautiful—like you do, and was so kind to Milly, and offered to come and sit with her sometimes, if I liked."

"Ah! they are more like angels than women," replied Miss Morton, "I wish I could tread in their footsteps. I should like to meet her; but of course she does not come in the evening. Good bye, now, I will come again to-morrow."

CHAPTER V.

MINISTRATIONS.

“ PLEASE, mamma, will you let me go with Miss Morton to see the little flower-girl this morning, as we are to have a holiday ?” said Lily to Mrs. Parkhurst, the next day.

“ I hope you have not been putting it into the child’s head, Miss Morton.”

“ No, indeed,” replied her governess, colouring ; “ she has been continually talking about the little girl ever since she saw her.”

“ Well, take her ; after all, you are as likely to bring any infection to the house as she is to catch it by going to these dreadful places,” returned Mrs. Parkhurst—whose mind was always fever-haunted—and giving Lily some money to purchase some delicacy for the little invalid, she bade her “ not stay too long in the hot room.”

Lily took a little basket with her, and bought some fresh fruit for Milly on her road to the

Smiths. When the landlady opened the door she said the sick child was worse ; and that the doctor, who was there, said she could not last long. He was feeling her pulse when they entered ; poor Mrs. Smith was wiping her red and swollen eyes with her apron ; Sally sat pale and speechless ; whilst poor Meggie, in a corner of the room, was trying to stifle her deep sobs. The doctor made a sign to Miss Morton to follow him as he left the room.

"The brain was much injured by the fall," he whispered, "and it will accelerate her death."

"Do not say so to Mrs. Parkhurst, unless she should ask you," replied Miss Morton ; "she has been very kind in giving temporal assistance and—"

"And the child is almost unconscious, and too young to need spiritual aid, and the mother tells me they have all been baptized."

"O, yes," returned Miss Morton ; "I knew something of Mrs. Smith when at Welford, and I know all her relations there. It is sad to see them so reduced, but so it is with many in this populous city. People come from the country in the hope of getting more work, and better wages here, and find themselves bitterly disappointed, without a friend to help them ; and, not liking to beg, or speak about their poverty,

they drop into the grave and are buried by the parish."

"Ah! I see enough of that," said the kind doctor, as he hurried away.

When Miss Morton re-entered the sick room, she found Lily sitting by the sick flower girl, holding a strawberry in her little plump, rosy fingers.

"Do eat it, dear, it is so nice and sweet," she said.

Milly raised her heavy eyelids, and the smile that lighted up her sunken eyes, as she faintly replied, "'Ow dood of 'ou," was never forgotten by Lily—she always loved poor sick children from that moment. She was just holding up another tempting strawberry, when a slight noise made her turn her eyes in the direction of the door, and to her surprise, she saw a Sister of Mercy, making the sign of the cross. Lily, instinctively withdrew from the bed-side. The nun advanced, and tenderly taking the child's wasted hand in hers, she said gently, "God bless you, my child! are you better?"

"No, ma'am. Glad 'ou tome," sighed the child.

"She gets weaker," said Miss Morton, bowing to the sister, "it is most kind of you to come, for the Smiths are not Cath— Roman Catholics."

"That makes no difference. We are willing to go anywhere where we are not unwelcome, and we must hope and pray that they may be brought into the 'One Fold.' "

"You belong to the Church of England, like the rest of your family?" said Miss Morton to Mrs. Smith, inquiringly.

"Yes, ma'am, we were none of us Methodists, nor Baptists, nor Dissenters of any sort that I know of," answered the poor woman, drawing herself up a little, and smoothing the edges of her apron rather nervously.

"Well, we must pray that the Dissenters may come back to the Church from which they have so needlessly separated," replied Miss Morton, earnestly.

"Then they must return to the Catholic Church," replied the Sister, "Christ could have instituted but *one* Church, with which the 'Holy Spirit would abide all days, even to the end of the world.' It is a marvel that anyone can read the Scriptures and not see this plain fact."

"But you are not allowed to read the Scriptures," returned Miss Morton.

"Assuredly we are, with the interpretation which the Church—which existed before the New Testament Scriptures were written—gives us. I read them, too, when a Protestant, from

my earliest childhood until I was a woman, and wondered where I should find the Church of which they spoke so plainly."

"Then you were not always a Catholic?" replied Miss Morton.

"No; not until three years ago, when—after, years of doubt and inquiry—I simply prayed that the Holy Spirit would guide me into all truth, and He could only lead me into the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church."

"It is very wonderful!" sighed Miss Morton, "I have often marvelled how so much that is good—I may say glorious—God-like—could spring from error. Pardon me," seeing the colour mount into the nun's face, "of course I have always been taught to believe the Church of Rome to be in error."

"But say, dear madam, have you never doubted the truth of your own Church, and has its teaching been always, clearly, in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures, and can you assert that it teaches *all* that they command you to believe and to do?"

Miss Morton coloured and sighed; she felt that she was baffled, if not beaten, for she had indeed been constantly in doubt about the true meaning of the Scriptures, and surprised and shocked to find how much not merely Dissenters but

the clergy in the Church of England disagreed about the most important doctrines and practices contained and enjoined in them. She was too straightforward to shuffle out of an argument, and, therefore, after a pause, she said frankly, "I will own I cannot fully answer your questions. I hope we shall meet again. You have given me much subject for serious thought, and earnest enquiry, for which I thank you. Will you kindly remember me in your prayers?" Then taking Lily by the hand, she took leave, promising to call the next day.

Mrs. Smith followed her benefactress to the door, leaving the nun on her knees by Milly's bedside.

"What a beautiful creature she is!" whispered Miss Morton, "God seems to choose the most lovely of our sex to be Sisters of Mercy, but it is the sweet expression of the countenance, and the gentle voice and manner, that is the chief attraction in these angelic women."

"I am so glad you've met her, and like her, ma'am; I was half afraid you might not—I mean upon account of her being a Catholic, for I knew you'd like her herself, for she's just one like yourself, and so good to the poor. I heard a neighbour say she's a nobleman's daughter."

When Mrs. Smith returned to the sick room,

the Sister was still kneeling by the bed, Milly's eyes were closed, and her thin hands crossed upon her breast.

"I think I must go now, my child," said the Sister, "unless you wish me to stay a little longer."

"Please ma'am, and say hymn now."

"Very well, but you must call me Sister—Sister Angela," and then she repeated slowly—

1. "O Paradise! O Paradise!

Who doth not crave for rest?

Who would not seek that happy land

Where they that love are blest?

Where loyal hearts and true

Stand ever in the light,

All rapture through and through,

In God's most holy sight.

2. "O Paradise! O Paradise!

Wherefore doth death delay?—

Bright death, that is the welcome dawn

Of our eternal day.

Where loyal hearts and true, &c.

3. "O Paradise! O Paradise!

'Tis weary waiting here;

I long to be where Jesus is,

To feel, to see Him near.

Where loyal hearts, &c.

4. "O Paradise ! O Paradise !
I want to sin no more ;
I want to be as pure on earth
As on that spotless shore.

Where loyal hearts, &c.

5. "O Paradise ! O Paradise !
I greatly long to see
The special place my dearest Lord
Is furnishing for me.

Where loyal hearts, &c.

6. "O Paradise ! O Paradise !
I feel 'twill not be long ;
Patience ! I almost think I hear
Faint fragments of thy song.

Where loyal hearts," &c.

F. W. FABER.

"That is a pretty hymn," said Sally, "I wish I could remember it."

"I will bring you a hymn book with that one in it," said Sister Angela, as she now left the room.

CHAPTER VI.

PASSING AWAY.

MILLY gradually sank. Sister Angela visited her every afternoon, praying silently, for the little creature was now almost unconscious; but she seemed to know when the Sister or Miss Morton entered the room, and put her little hand in theirs, but she could no longer raise those heavy eyelids. Miss Morton could only go in the evening, so that she and Sister Angela did not meet for some days. One morning, however, Lily begged so hard to be allowed once more to visit the sick child, that Mrs. Parkhurst could not refuse her request. "Do not stay long," she said, "for George does not seem well; I hope he has not caught any fever."

"I hope not," replied Miss Morton, as she left the room with Lily. She had felt anxious herself about his looks for some days.

When they reached Mrs. Smith's, they found the door open, and saw that she and the Sister,

who was there, and poor Sally and Meggie were all kneeling. Lily and Miss Morton knelt too. Milly lay quite still; the sunny curls almost covered the forehead: the weary eyes were closed—although they knew it not—for ever: so quietly, so peacefully had the soul of the little flower girl passed away to dwell with God and the angels in the “land beyond the sea.”

And there, beside Heaven’s crystal stream,
Unfading flowers bloom.

At length Sister Angela said in a low voice, “Blessed be God, who hath this day called the soul of this little one unto the kingdom of Heaven.”

“O, I do thank Him,” sobbed the poor mother, “but I think my heart will break,” for she now saw that all was over. “O I wish,” she continued, “I had some minister of religion to speak to, but they never come, and I should be afraid to go to any one of them.”

“Would you like to see Father Langton,” said Sister Angela, “he would come if you wished it, or you could go to him, which would be better still.”

“Well,” said Mrs. Smith, trying to check her tears, and glancing timidly at Miss Morton, “I think I should, for I have been very neglect-

ful since I came to London. I have been ashamed to go to church in such old clothes, and nobody went about here, so I didn't feel ashamed about not going, and there was no one to tell me I was doing wrong."

"But now," replied Sister Angela, "you should go to one who will set you right—who is commissioned by God to forgive you your sins. You have read your Bible, and must remember how Christ gave his Apostles authority to remit sins. 'Whose sins ye forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins ye retain, they are retained.'"—John xx. 23.

"But surely," said Miss Morton, "that command was only given to the Apostles."

"Pardon me," replied Sister Angela, "it might as well be said that the command to baptize and teach all nations, and to administer the Holy Eucharist was only given to the Apostles. Let the prejudices of early education be removed, and no candid and prayerful reader of the Protestant Bible could fail to become a Catholic, or rather, I should say, to return to the faith of his fathers."

"The thing is, so few people like to confess their faults," said Mrs. Smith, "and yet I think I must if I was going to die; and I saw in the service for the sick, that I was reading

in my old Prayer Book, that people are to confess to the minister, when they are dying, so as we don't know any moment but we may die, it's as well to confess what's on our minds while we can, and I'm sure I've a deal on mine just now."

"Well, good-bye," said the Sister, "pray that the Holy Spirit may guide you into all truth, and be assured He will. I will call to-morrow, if another dying child I am visiting does not detain me."

During this whispered conversation, Sally had been eagerly listening, quite heedless of Lily's constant entreaty to take some of the fruit which she had brought for her little favourite, who, she was informed, would never eat anything again. And next to Milly, Sally, with her pale face and large dark eyes had excited Lily's compassion. "Do take some strawberries, dear," said the little girl, "and don't fret so," seeing the large tears that were flowing down Sally's cheeks, and trying to wipe them away, "perhaps Milly will wake up again some day, and be quite well."

"Oh, no, that can never be, but I wish I were sure I should go to her some day."

"So you will, darling, I'm sure," sobbed Meggie, throwing her arms round her sister's

neck, "but not yet, dearie, I do hope ; we've got up a bit through Miss Morton's kindness, and so, perhaps, you'll get strong now."

"I wish I could take you home," said the kind-hearted Lily, "and put you in one of our nice bed rooms, and then I could often come and feed you with nice things, and Miss Morton could read to you in the evening, and Georgie shouldn't tease you, that he shouldn't."

Sally thanked her kind friend, but she thought how little the fine bed room, and nice things to eat would make up for the loss of her dear mother and Meggie.

"I will ask mamma, and tell you what she says when I come next time," said Lily, as she was led out of the chamber of death by Miss Morton.

CHAPTER VII.

. THE INFECTED HOUSE.

“O I thought you would never come,” said Mrs. Parkhurst, as she met Miss Morton and Lily in the hall, on their return from the Smiths. “George is much worse ; I fear there is fever coming on. I have sent for Mr. Singleton, and expect him every moment. Will you go at once to George?”—for Mrs. Parkhurst had a high opinion of Miss Morton in every respect, although she would not own it, even to herself, and was extremely jealous and annoyed when anyone ventured to praise her children’s governess.

Miss Morton hastened, with a throbbing heart, to Georgie’s room. He looked wistfully at her as she entered. “How are you Georgie ?” she said, cheerfully, and quietly seating herself by the bed-side—“Have you a headache ?”

“Oh, yes !” replied George, turning impatiently away ; “it aches and burns.”

“Well, my boy ! what’s the matter ?” said

Mr. Singleton, the doctor, as he entered the room. "Got a headache, and all sorts of aches, eh?"—and, after a few more questions, he left the room, with Mrs. Parkhurst, saying he would send some medicine and call early in the morning.

Miss Morton sat up with Georgie all night, and his anxious mother came several times to look at him, and whisper inquiries to Miss Morton. His mind seemed to wander a little, and he was very restless. He talked about "the ugly lady," and Richmond where he had been with his father on the holiday when Lily asked permission to go to the flower girl. He talked of Milly and flowers alternately, and once he looked wistfully at Miss Morton, and asked how the sick child was. His governess smiled, and said,

"Milly is very happy now."

"Ah, yes! she's out of the cellar. I'm glad you got her out of it. She'd pretty golden curls, hadn't she?—not dark as night, like yours. Oh! how my head burns and aches!"

"Shall I bathe it?" said his governess, putting her hand on his forehead. She started, for she felt large spots on it. The horrible truth flashed upon her mind at once; but the dim night-lamp had been so placed that she

could not see his face. Sensitive, however, as she naturally was, early training, and long attendance upon the sick, had taught her self-control, and she possessed it in no ordinary degree. So, kneeling down where Georgie could not see her, she prayed that the poor boy's life might be spared—that his parents might be supported under this dreadful trial; and then she thought of Sister Angela—of her last words: “Pray that the Holy Spirit may guide you into all truth”—and she did most fervently; it seemed as if she had never prayed before. Then she arose, and took her seat by George, and watched his restless tossings until the morning dawned, and then the terrible sight made her heart sicken, for she felt sure, although she had never seen anyone who had the small-pox, that the poor child was the victim of that dreadful disease. She shuddered as she thought of the agony of his poor mother, when she should first look at that once small and well-formed head, and she stationed herself near the door, to listen for her step on the stairs, that she might, as gently as possible, break the sad news to her. She thought not of herself—that she might catch the disease and die—although she had never had it. She resolved to nurse him to the end, unless she should fall sick herself.

When she heard Mrs. Parkhurst coming up stairs she slipped quietly out of the room and met her on the landing. She almost loved her, in her deep sorrow, at that moment. Taking her hand, which Mrs. Parkhurst did not refuse, she led her into another room, telling her George was not worse, but that the disease had developed itself in the night.

"What is it?" said his poor mother. "Is it scarlet fever? or"—seeing Miss Morton looked very pale—"is he dead?"

"Oh, no! dear madam, thank God! You must be prepared, however, to see him much changed, for it is small-pox."

Mrs. Parkhurst sank upon a chair.

"And *you* have done this!—*you* have brought misery, perhaps death, into this once happy home," she said, bitterly.

Miss Morton said nothing. She only followed the poor mother when she arose from her seat and went to George's room, and placed a chair for her, seeing she could not stand.

Yes, there he is, fond mother: the pride and darling of your heart—he who you hoped would, one day, inherit the greater portion of his father's enormous wealth.

"What are these spots?" said George, turning round, and looking at his mother.

"We must ask Mr. Singleton when he comes," returned Mrs. Parkhurst.

Mr. Singleton came very early, and told George to "cheer up, take his medicine, and keep as quiet as possible," informing Mr. and Mrs. Parkhurst that it was small-pox, but that their boy was young and healthy, so that there was no apparent danger, at present.

"It is Miss Morton's fault," said Mrs. Parkhurst, "but I blame myself most for allowing her to go to those Smiths."

"Nay, dear madam," said the benevolent doctor, "he has not caught the disease through her visits there. There is no fever of any kind in that locality, at present. Can you trace it to any cause?—has he been anywhere lately?"

"Only to Richmond," replied Mr. Parkhurst; "but we drove there in the phaeton: a slight accident, however, occurred on the road, so that I sent it back, and, after dining at an hotel, returned to town by train, and the close carriage met us at the station. He has not been in any dirty cabs, nor anywhere that I can think of where he would be likely to catch a fever."

"Well!" replied Mr. Singleton, "you may all"—and he looked at Miss Morton, who was pale and trembling—"feel quite easy in your minds that George is not suffering through the

fault of anyone here present. Miss Morton is a good nurse, I can see, and is not unwilling to turn Sister of Mercy for a time, and you may safely trust your boy with her."

Mrs. Parkhurst would rather have trusted him with anyone else, so keenly did she feel the supposed wrong Miss Morton had done her in going to the Smiths, for nothing could convince her that it had not been the cause of her present trouble. She felt confidence in her, however, and, without knowing it, she had an instinctive sense of her superiority, both morally and mentally—indeed, from this sprang, in reality, her partial dislike to her.

George grew daily worse. Miss Morton never left him. Mrs. Parkhurst wandered, night and day, backwards and forwards from her own room to the sick child's, sometimes trying to rest a little. Mr. Parkhurst took apartments in the neighbourhood. Augusta and Lily had been sent off, with Mary and some of the most timid servants, to Oaklands, their country house in Hampshire. None of the servants who remained would come up beyond the first floor, and the hired nurse brought what was needed for the sick child. In a few days she became ill and was obliged to leave. Mr. Singleton, in vain, tried to get some one to supply her place,

but Miss Morton kept up—he knew she would—but she would feel it afterwards.

One evening, she heard a slight rustling noise on the landing, and going out, she saw Mrs. Smith.

“O ! I’m sadly afraid for you, Miss Morton, and you’re not strong,” said the poor woman, “and I prayed God would let me do something for Him, and you, and the poor dear child, just to show how I thank Him for His mercy, for I’m soon to be received into the Catholic Church.”

“Thank God !” said Miss Morton, involuntarily.

“Then, God has opened your eyes, too, ma’am ? ” said her astonished hearer.

“Hush ! ” replied Miss Morton, “we must not whisper: it always annoys the sick. You had better stay outside for the present ; it would startle him if he suddenly saw a strange face,”—and she quietly returned to the bedside and sat down. “Yes,” she thought, in answer to the poor woman’s question ; “God has opened my eyes to see that I have no firm faith in the teaching of the Protestant Church, and certainly none at all in my own, or anyone’s, interpretation of the Bible.”

“It is sad,” she mused, “to see this poor

child—in danger of death and old enough to be accountable to God—left without a spiritual guide, yet, what can I do? I can only pray for him. His mind wanders so frequently; I fear he will die so, poor child!"

"Where's mamma?" murmured George.

"Coming," replied Miss Morton, as she went out of the room to call her.

"Here I am," said Mrs. Parkhurst.

The poor child looked at her, vacantly.

"Ah! you're not mamma; you're the lady in the train—so ugly! Oh! take her away!" and he screamed with terror. "Ah! little flower girl!—pretty curls, hadn't she? Won't she go to Heaven when she dies?—and shall I?" said he, looking wistfully at his governess.

"I hope so," she replied. "You must try and pray that you may, and be patient, and be very sorry for your faults."

"Ah! but I'm so hot, I can't; and it's so dark—so very dark."

"Then he is blind now," said Mrs. Parkhurst, in a low voice. "Oh! Miss Morton, what have you done?"

"Do you think, madam," said Miss Morton, "it would be any comfort to him to see the Rector?"

"What!" said Mrs. Parkhurst; "would you

have him risk his life, and the lives of his wife and children?—and all for no good that I can see."

"It would be for no good, certainly," thought her hearer, for the child was too young to receive Communion in the Church of England, and for confession, although the Rector *recommended* confession to *some* members of his congregation.

"Who is that woman outside?" said Mrs. Parkhurst.

"It is Mrs. Smith, who has come to see if she can be of any service to you."

"Why, she will bring another fever into the house," said Mrs. Parkhurst, pettishly.

Miss Morton began to feel indignant, for she was not now herself the object of Mrs. Parkhurst's ungrateful remarks, and she replied,

"So, madam, might any hired nurse, who, necessarily, attends all cases of fever. Mrs. Smith comes for the love of God, and with a grateful heart to do anything she can in a trial when sometimes our dearest friends may be tempted to forsake us."

Mrs. Parkhurst felt mortified, although not humbled, for she was, too painfully, conscious that Miss Morton and Mrs. Smith were the only two beings in the whole circle of her large

acquaintance who would venture to knock at the door, much less enter that infected house. She knew, too, that she had neither the strength nor the courage to nurse her poor helpless child. She slipped away quietly to her own room, saying, "Good evening," to Mrs. Smith, as she passed her.

Mrs. Smith remained in the sick room until a change for the better took place in George. Mrs. Parkhurst now sickened, and the good woman nursed her as tenderly as she had her beloved children, and just as her new patient was recovering, she became herself a victim to the disease. "Send a note to Sister Angela," she said to Miss Morton, finding she was too ill to be of any assistance. The Sister soon came.

"I cannot stay all night with you," she said, "but there are nuns who can, and I will send you one if they are not all engaged, and Mrs. Parkhurst does not object."

Mrs. Parkhurst was too weak and cast down to object to anything but being left alone, helpless as she now was. Mr. Singleton agreed to send for the nursing Sister—he highly appreciated those "noble women," as he always called them. One came and took charge of poor Mrs. Smith, whilst Miss Morton, who never flagged, attended to Mrs. Parkhurst, and Georgie, who

was now convalescent. In a few days he was conveyed, in a close carriage, to Oaklands, Augusta and Lily being first sent to the sea-side. Mrs. Smith's case was the worst of all, and the sufferings of the last twelve months had so weakened her that she had little chance of being able to battle with her fearful illness. "I must see Father Langton," she said, "before I get too ill to make my confession. Ask Mrs. Parkhurst if he may come." The Sister descended to Mrs. Parkhurst's room.

"Pardon me," said Sister Clare, and bowing gracefully.

Mrs. Parkhurst perceived that the new nurse was not merely a nun, but a lady, and courteously asked her what she required.

"Mrs. Smith is very ill," replied the Sister, "and would like to see the Priest. May he come?"

"The Priest!" echoed Mrs. Parkhurst, abstractedly; then, rousing herself, she said, with a sigh, "Oh, yes! if he likes—if he likes the risk. Anyone may come, who has the courage, to this wretched, dreary, house."

Father Langton came. Mrs. Parkhurst heard him go upstairs. She almost envied Mrs. Smith her visitor; she felt so lonely—Miss Morton having asked if she could spare her for

a short time—all was so awfully still in that infected house, and the muffled roll of the carriages on the straw in the street had such a mournful sound. She seldom wept, but tears now stole down her cheeks, for she felt, for the first time in her life, that she was unloved. Yes, the mistress of that splendid mansion was, at that moment, without a friend near her ; dependent for help on her children's governess and a Sister of Mercy, whom she had often laughed at for their absurd notions about visiting the sick and poor. And they could not *love* her, she was sure of that, and she felt jealous of the attention the poor sufferer, who had done so much for her, was receiving at their hands. Yes, the poor woman who had lived in a cellar was ministered to with the same unremitting care as she had been ! She thought how terrible it would be if she were to die in the house ; then she thought of her own death ; everything seemed so distinct to her. She never forgot that night when she heard the Priest's step on the stairs, as he went up and went down, and all was still again in that almost deserted house. She never forgot it, and it was well, for it was a time of warning ; there was a still small voice, “Awake thou that sleepest : arise from the dead !” She did not reject the call : it was well, for she

might not receive another. It was well that she arose and worked while it was day, and remembered the poor and needy for the sake of Him who said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me." Years afterwards there was the sound of that same Priest's footprint on those same stairs, as he went up and went down again from that same room where she now sat, and where she then received the Last Sacraments, and died peacefully in the bosom of the true Church.

Mrs. Smith was received into the Church that night, and the next morning she received Holy Communion. She became rapidly worse, as Mr. Singleton had expected, but her mind was clear to the last. She commended her children to God. "He has been pleased," she said, "to raise up friends to them in you, ma'am," addressing Miss Morton, "and in Father Langton. Sally slipped out and went to the church that night, when you and Sister Angela were last with us. I followed her, and saw her go and speak to Father Langton in the confessional, and I went and asked him to call. It was well I did, for you never came again, nor Sister Angela; and then I heard the news of your trouble, and ran here; and if I and Sally had refused the call we had that night, I might

never have seen Father Langton, and had his instructions before I came here ; and it's a fearful thing to leave it to the last moment to prepare to die."

When Mrs. Smith was dying, and Father Langton was summoned to administer to her the Last Sacraments, Mrs. Parkhurst timidly asked Miss Morton if she thought he would mind coming in to see her. It cost her a long struggle to make the request, but she dared not attempt to drown the warning voice, "Awake thou that sleepest"—"Come, follow Me!" and she arose and followed Him who bid her "come," that she might possess life everlasting.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUSION.

MR. PARKHURST declared he would never see his wife again. Occasionally she was permitted to see her children, and Lily and George always retained their affection for her; but Augusta, who, as soon as she was old enough after her mother left home, had taken her place, quite lost the little affection she had for her. A few months before his death, Mr. Parkhurst sent for his wife, without, however, expressing any sorrow for the past, and she returned to experience cold politeness from him, and haughty indifference from her eldest child. Lily had been sent to school in Paris, and George was at Oxford.

The Merchant-Prince died as he had lived, thinking only of the accumulation of wealth. He was suddenly seized with a fit of apoplexy while at dinner, and never spoke again. With the exception of a life-annuity to his wife, he

left one half of his immense fortune to his son, when he should become of age, on condition that he should not have become a Catholic. The other half was to be divided between Augusta and Lily, and the same conditions were named with regard to the latter as with George.

Augusta was twenty-three, and being entitled to receive her portion, she soon married a fortune-hunter, and narrowly escaped ending her days in a "ground-floor-back."

George was within a month of his majority. He received his fortune, mingled with the gay and thoughtless, chose no profession, was courted by the world for his wealth; but he was not happy. The little flower girl—that dreadful sickness—and Miss Morton's answer, when he asked if she thought he would go to Heaven, "*I hope so,*" ever haunted him. If she only hoped for him *then*, what would she say *now?* And where is she—his gentle governess? And his mother and Lily? What is he doing for them? His mother died a few months after his father's death. Lily, who was only eighteen, renounced her fortune, but she could draw the interest until she became of age, so that she was enabled to contribute to the comfort of her early friend and instructress in a lingering illness of which she died about two years after

Mr. Parkhurst's death. Miss Morton had, as may be supposed, embraced the Catholic Faith. George, at her request, came to see her a short time before her death.

"You are going to Heaven," he said, bursting into tears; "and shall I?"

"*I hope so,*" replied Miss Morton. "We must hope and pray, and ask for the forgiveness of our sins in the way in which Christ appointed. He gave His Apostles, and their successors power to forgive sins, and we must *do* what our Lord commands, and in the way He chooses, as well as *believe* in Him."

"Yes," replied George, "I know it. I do not forget all that passed through my mind when I lay ill with the small-pox. I thought I had been the cause of Milly Smith's death, but was afraid to own it, and tried to forget it, but I could not. I have not forgotten all that you and my mother, and Lily have said; it haunts me in the theatre, the ball-room—wherever I go; but I love the world, and I cannot give it up."

"George," replied Miss Morton, solemnly, "listen to the request of a dying woman. Before you sleep to-night, ask your offended Creator what you shall do to inherit eternal life? If He bid you to 'Go and sell all and give to the

poor,' do not go away sorrowful, like the young man in the parable. God may not, however, call you to do that, but He will ask you to love Him with all your heart and mind, and soul and strength, and your neighbour as yourself. He will command you to obey the Church, to receive the Sacraments, to try to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect; for 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord,' and we cannot be holy without using the means which He has given us, in His Holy Church, to lead us to perfection."

Miss Morton could say no more. She gave her hand to her old pupil; hot tears fell upon it as he pressed it for the last time, and whispered, "Pray for me."

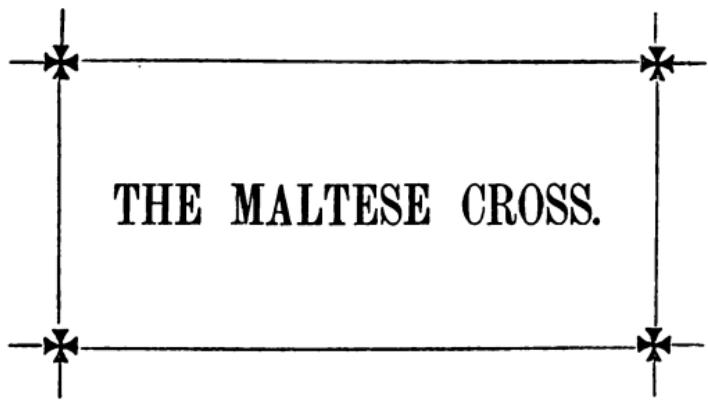
"Pray for yourself!" she faintly murmured.

And George did pray that very night, and heard and obeyed the command to "Go and sell all," and in the very church where Miss Morton, Lily, and the Smiths had been received, not far from the splendid mansion in which he had lived from his infancy, he took the solemn vows that bound him to the Priesthood for life. Some years afterwards, during one of his parochial visits, he found his unhappy sister Augusta, in one of the houses in the very street where he first knew the Smiths. She had always

refused to see her Catholic relatives after their conversion. Her husband had squandered her large fortune, and had at last deserted her and her two children. The brother and sister whom she had scorned, saved her from dying of want.

Lily, to whom her brother had restored her fortune, upon her becoming of age, spent it in works of charity. She always had a special love for sick children, and never forgot her visit to the little flower girl. George told her one day, that he was convinced that he caught the small-pox by sitting next to a lady who had had it, in the train, when they came from Richmond, a few days before he was taken ill ; she was muffled up, and had two veils drawn down ; the wind blew them aside as she was assisted out of the carriage, and he saw her face—he never forgot it—and was afterwards certain that she had recently had the small-pox.

Father Parkhurst amply provided for the Smiths. Meggie married a good Catholic. Sally was always ailing, but outlived all her benefactors. She was never tired of telling her sister's children the story of her conversion—always ending with, “ Ah ! your mother and I thank God, daily, that we left our cottage by the mill-stream, and lived, for a time, in a cellar.”



THE MALTESE CROSS.

CHAPTER I.

THE "NARROW ROAD"

"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the road, and few there be that find it."

"WHAT is this cross called that Mrs. Maitland gave me the other day? It is not like the one you wear," said Ida Mornington to her French maid.

"It is a Maltese Cross, and was worn by the Knights of Malta, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, who sheltered and defended the pilgrims to the Holy City. They wore a white cross with eight points—signifying the eight beatitudes—on the left breast. You have not, I dare say, forgotten those beautiful lines you were reading about the knights the other day."

"O no! Therèse," replied Ida, and in a clear, but somewhat tremulous voice, she repeated:—

“ Noblest of knighthood’s gallant sons were ye,
A sainted band, the Knights of Charity !
’Twas not an earthly guerdon that could move
Your gentle Brotherhood to acts of love ;
Fame’s silver star, and honor’s dazzling meeds,
And glory reaped in battle’s daring deeds,—
These could not lure these hearts to mercy given,
Who, poor on earth, were rich in hopes of heaven !
Yes; it was well, in those dark days of old,
Europe should wonder, as her pilgrims told
How haughty warriors left the lordly hall
For the rude cells of that poor hospital,
And bid ambition’s restless throbings cease
At the still watch-word of the Prince of Peace ;
How along Salem’s streets, in sable vest,
The silver cross emblazoned on the breast,
The lowly brothers moved, with hurried tread,
To tend the wayworn pilgrim’s dying bed,
And give for Christ’s dear name, in that dread hour,
Religion’s awful, consecrating power.”

“ I shall dream of the knights instead of the angels to-night,” added Ida, with a sigh, when she had finished repeating the lines. “ I often dream of angels, Therèse,” she continued, after a pause, “ and when I am frightened at night, I really think I see them—I am sure I do.”

“ O no ! you cannot really see them, but we know that, although unseen by us, they are sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.”

"Well, I think I see them ; and when I cannot sleep at night, they seem to come and tell me not to be afraid."

"Well, dear Miss Ida, we all know that you are rather a fanciful little girl. You must not imagine you really see the angels ; only great saints see such glorious things."

"What is a saint, Therèse ?"

"One who has, by God's grace, conquered every fault, and is fit to go at once to Heaven when he dies," replied her maid.

"How I should like to be a saint ! for I should like to go soon to Heaven, where I should never do wrong again : and I should wear clean linen, fine and white, like the angels, and be always with them."

"And with God," added Therèse.

"Ah ! yes," sighed Ida, "but I am a little afraid of God, and I don't know that I quite love Him."

"But you must love Him, or you cannot go to Heaven. It is one of the commandments. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.'"

"Yes, I know it is, Therèse ; I have often thought about it, and I mean to pray very hard that I may love Him."

"That is right : you cannot love Him unless

He gives you the grace; but you know, He gives to all who ask. ‘Ask, and ye shall receive.’ ”

Ida had said more than she had ever done before about sacred things, and there was a bright flush on her cheek, and there were tears in her large blue eyes when she stole upstairs; and she went into her mamma’s room, and sank on her knees before a picture of St. Gabriel that hung there.

“O, beautiful angel!” she said, “how God must love you! He cannot refuse you anything you ask. Pray to God for me, that I may love Him, and go at once to Him when I die.”

Then her little head sank on the low ottoman before which she had been kneeling, with one soft white arm beneath it, and she thought the angel answered, “Such as be faithful in love shall abide with Him. Come, and see how those who love God and long to be saints get to Heaven; and how those who love Him not are lost.”

Then Ida followed the angel to the summit of a hill, from whence she saw a “narrow road”—rough, stony, and dusty—and pilgrims belonging to all the nations of the earth, each bearing a cross, were travelling along it towards a Glorious City, governed by a great and good

King, which they were told they could not fail to reach, provided they never wandered from that rough road into the broad, and, apparently, easier one that ran parallel with it, separated by a hedge and ditch ; and also, that they faithfully obeyed the King, and those whom he had set in authority over them. These latter acted as a good shepherd to a flock of sheep, guiding the pilgrims when the road divided, and they were in doubt which turning to take. There was one, too, who commanded the whole of the pilgrims, bearing in his hand a shepherd's crook. The King had given him the keys of the Glorious City (Matthew xvi. 18, 19), and power to admit the pilgrims through the "strait gate." The good shepherds, or pastors who acted under him, prepared the pilgrims for their journey by cleansing them in pure water, and giving them a cross, a white garment—which they were to carry without stain—and a lamp, which they were to keep burning brightly to the end of their pilgrimage. It was up-hill work. Some, however, were stronger than others, and helped the weaker pilgrims, and occasionally they found a shady spot where they might rest a little and heal the wounds in their bleeding feet. Some of them had a heavier cross to bear than their neighbours.

Most of them often stumbled and fell over the rough stones on the road, and soiled the white garment, and then they were compelled to have recourse to one of the pastors, who alone had power to cleanse it in the name of the Good King of the Glorious City, whose Son had once carried His cross along that same road, and been crucified upon it. In His Precious Blood the soiled garment of each pilgrim was purified, and that *alone*, applied by the shepherds, could restore it to its original whiteness (John xx. 22, 23).

There were some of the pilgrims, however, who were constant sources of grief and annoyance to the rest. They murmured at the weight of the cross : the white garment was so stained, that few could imagine that it had ever been clean : the lamp burned dimly for want of sufficient oil. They loitered sadly on the road —sleeping or lounging in the resting-places by the way-side. They often held converse with the travellers on the broad road—looking through the gaps in the hedge which separated the two roads—and feeling strongly tempted just to try if that would lead them to the Glorious City. But there were shining ones ever watching them, and a “still small voice” ever warning them, “To him that overcometh, I will give to

eat of the tree of life." Some of these loiterers would heed the warning, and go sorrowfully to one of the pastors and ask for oil for his lamp, and beg that his soiled garment might be cleansed, and petition for the "Bread of Life," with which the pilgrims were sustained on their journey. Then they would take up their cross bravely, and go on quickly and joyfully—choosing always the roughest side of the road, trying to help the weak or the weary.

The pastors offered up a "Daily Sacrifice" (Mal. i. 10, 11), of the "Bread of Life," which should never cease until all the pilgrims should arrive at the Glorious City, and at which they were all at stated times bound to assist. Without this "Holy Bread," with which the pastors fed them, they would have fainted by the way; and the King's Son had said, "he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever."

Towards the close of their journey the pastors anointed the pilgrims with holy oil (James v. 14), which strengthened them, and enabled them to go cheerfully, although warily, through the narrow pass that finally led to the "strait gate;" for the King had enemies who wished to prevent as many as possible from entering the City and paying Him homage. They were on the heights

above the pass, and threw fiery darts at the pilgrims, who were weary with their journey. They wore, however, the Good King's armour, which sent the darts flying back in the faces of their enemies.

The pilgrims whose garments were free from "spot or wrinkle," were admitted at once into the Glorious City, where they exchanged their heavy cross for the victor's waving palm, and a "beautiful crown from the King's right hand;" and they cast their crowns at His feet, saying, "To Him that sitteth upon the throne, benediction and honour, and power and glory for ever and ever!" They needed no lamp, for there was no night!—the glory of the King enlightened the City.

But the pilgrims upon whose garments there appeared the least "spot or wrinkle," were not admitted immediately into the City. They had to wait in a dreary place until their garments were made perfectly white in the Precious Blood of the Crucified One, where, however, they could receive no further defilement. Many petitions were offered for them to the King by the Queen, and the shining ones who had so faithfully watched over them, by the pilgrims, also, who had reached the City, and by those who were still on the narrow road. Sooner or

later, therefore, as their garments were made white, they passed through the "strait gate" into the City, where "nothing defiled could enter."

And the King wiped away all tears from their faces, and His name was written on their foreheads, and they lived with Him for ever!

CHAPTER II.

THE BROAD ROAD.

“Broad is the road that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that walk therein.”

ON the left hand side of the “narrow road,” lay a very broad and pleasant one—at least, so it seemed at first sight. It was crowded with people of all nations. Some of them had once been cleansed in the purifying water, and had received the white garment, the cross, and the lamp. Some had walked for a time on the narrow road, but had been tempted to wander into the broad one ; of these, a few repented of their folly, and returned. Many of these travellers, however, had never been prepared, in any way, for their journey ; many had never heard that any preparation was necessary. Some had not heard of the Good King nor of the Glorious City. A few—a very few—did not believe that either He or the Glorious City

existed at all. They *all* knew, however, that their journey must have *an end*. A large proportion of this immense multitude thought very little about it; the remainder hoping to find rest after their journey. They had a Guide-Book to the City, which a few of the travellers read, and to which some of them constantly referred, but it was so difficult to understand without the key, and that could only be obtained of the pastors on the narrow road. Those poor travellers who were really in earnest about getting to the City, found the road anything but easy. They were jostled about, and the crowd was sometimes so great that they could scarcely see a yard before them. The noise and confusion, too, were so incessant, that they found it difficult to collect their thoughts and examine their Guide. The immense breadth of the road, likewise, was very bewildering. Some took the right, some the left, whilst others preferred the middle path. Some—the bolder and more intelligent among the travellers—offered to lead the rest, and to explain the Guide, but it was useless without the key. Now and then, those who were really anxious to reach the City, would go to the right side of the road, and peep into the narrow road through one of the gaps in the hedge.

Then they heard a still small voice, saying “Narrow is the way. If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross daily.” And they saw that the road was narrow, and that the pilgrims carried crosses in various shapes. Then the sweet voice spoke again, “I am the Good Shepherd; I know My sheep and mine know Me; there shall be One Fold and one Shepherd.” And they saw that the pilgrims had pastors, or shepherds, who guided them, and that the King’s Son had appointed one to rule the rest in His name, and that he had the keys of the Glorious City. They beheld that the pastors fed the pilgrims with Holy Bread, which came from the Glorious City; and they heard the voice again, saying “I am the Living Bread; if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever.” They saw how it strengthened the pilgrims, and how happy they seemed—how they went on singing songs of praise to the King and to His Son, heeding not the stones and thorns that wounded their feet. After all, the poor travellers had not found the broad road so pleasant as they had expected, and they began seriously to doubt whether it could be the right one. Now and then, one of these anxious ones would bravely cross the ditch, and pass through one of the gaps in the hedge that separated the

two roads, and go to one of the pastors, and ask him to explain all he had seen, and beg of him to guide him to the Glorious City. Some of his late companions would look after him wistfully, and wish they had the courage to follow his example. Others would sneer at him, and call him a fool for his pains. Many were very angry, and would try to mend the gaps in the hedge, that the travellers might not see what passed on the "narrow road."

The travellers nearest the hedge, lingered longest on the broad road, for they flattered themselves that they were not among the "mixed multitude." They had received the cross and the white garment, but the latter was soiled, and only the pastors on the narrow road had received authority to cleanse it. They watched the pilgrims with anxious eye through the gaps, and imitated them in many things which they deemed desirable to assist them on their journey; but it was long before any of them ventured to cross the ditch.

The travellers on the left-hand side of the broad road, and the farthest from the hedge, who would not believe that there was any King whom they were bound to serve, nor any city to reach, tried to make themselves as comfortable as they could; but they found it weary

walking. The turf that had looked so green when they first started, became scorched by the sun; the flowers and leaves were constantly falling from the once luxuriant bowers; the fruits that had looked so tempting, were either sour or rotten. They could only hope that the road might improve as they advanced. They did not help each other in any difficulty, and were by no means friendly with the travellers in the middle path, nor on the right-hand side of the road; indeed, there seemed little concord or happiness amongst any of the travellers. They all agreed, however, in shunning the pilgrims and the narrow road.

None of the travellers were left without warning by the Good King, who wished that all should find the right road; the “still small voice” often spoke to them, “strait is the gate, and narrow is the road, and few there be that find it; *seek and ye shall find*. Broad is the road that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that walk therein. The *fearful and unbelieving* shall have their portion in the Lake of Fire.” Each of them had, also, as well as the pilgrims, a bright being, whom he could not see, ever near him, ever warning him, ever pleading for him to the King—a “ministering spirit,” so pure and beautiful, that, had he been

visible, few could have refused to follow him. They could hear, however, the "still small voice," so clear—so distinct. To some it spoke sternly; to others in gentle, pleading tones. Most of the wayfarers tried to drown the sound by mingling with the noisiest amongst the crowd, or to escape from it by hurrying onwards, or by trying to sleep in one of the way-side bowers.

From time to time, however, a few people from all parts of the broad road, and out of every nation, joined the happy pilgrims, and they soon discovered that the cross they had so much dreaded was lighter, and the narrow road far less rough, than they had expected,—rejoicing exceedingly that they had escaped from the road that led to the Lake of Fire.

CHAPTER III.

GOOD AND BAD ANGELS.

Now the travellers on the broad road had a leader whom they could not see, although his fiery eyes were ever fixed upon them. He was a mighty prince, and once held a high place in the Glorious City; but having formed a conspiracy against the Good King, he was cast out—together with a third part of the King's subjects who had joined in the rebellion—into the Lake of Fire. These horrible creatures, of course, hated the Good King and his Son, and used every art they could devise to hinder the travellers from finding the narrow road. Sometimes they walked to and fro amongst them, whispering in their ears that there existed no Glorious City—no Lake of Fire. To those who would not listen to this they suggested that the road they were in was safe enough, and would become pleasanter as they went farther. They were constantly misleading the

travellers by false lights, always alluring them to the left side.

These vicious creatures especially hated the pilgrims, and harassed and hindered them on their journey; but they could not hurt them, and if the cross were shown to them, in the name of the King's Son, they trembled, and were compelled to fly. They were continually opposed by legions of those ministering spirits who were ever guarding the pilgrims and the travellers, and by their beautiful Queen—the mother of the King's Son—whom the pilgrims loved and honored exceedingly, and whom they often begged to intercede for them when they had a petition to present to the King. The King's enemies hated her beyond measure, for they knew how He loved Her, and that she would one day crush their prince beneath her feet. "She was clothed with the sun, and wore a crown of twelve stars, and the moon was her footstool." Her heart having been pierced with a sword when her Son was crucified, they called her "Queen of Martyrs." Amongst many other titles, they called her "Blessed Virgin" (Luke i, 48), and the blessing of the King and of his Son rested upon all she did, and upon all those who loved and honoured her.

So the poor travellers who had not courage to walk in the narrow road, went on, doubting to the last; some cursing and swearing, ever trying to drown the warning voice, “The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and the people that *forget* the King. The *fearful* and *unbelieving* shall have their portion in the Lake of Fire;” where they shall be tormented by the Prince of Darkness *for ever*.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOOD PASTOR.

"IDA! my dear child; what have you been doing all this time? Have you been asleep?" said Mrs. Mornington, anxiously, as she entered her room, and saw Ida leaning against the ottoman.

"Yes, mamma; and I have had such a strange dream, about two roads. I wish I were walking in the narrow one: it is the way to Heaven—the only way; and I long to go there so much."

"My dear Ida! You must not talk so," replied Mrs. Mornington, nervously; "you are very young, and not likely to go to Heaven yet."

"Nor ready yet." And Ida remembered, with a sigh, that she had no pastor and no cross. The meaning of the white garment and the lamp she could not understand.

She said no more, for she saw that her mother looked sad and uneasy. A pang had indeed shot through Mrs. Mornington's heart, as she looked at the flushed cheek, and drooping eyelids of her last earthly treasure, and she herself was a widow.

"Not ready yet, for I have no pastor, and no cross," sighed Ida often during the next two years, as she gradually grew paler and thinner. "I have a mother's love, and every comfort this world can give. I must be very far from the 'narrow road.' "

But Ida had a cross, for while clinging—light-hearted and affectionate as she naturally was—to all that was joyous and beautiful in this world, there was ever a "still small voice" warning her that she must soon die and leave it; that she and her mother—whom she passionately loved—must part, sooner or later. She had her cross, therefore, but she turned away—she did not *take it up*; had she done so, she would have found it lighter: it was the shadow that oppressed and saddened her. Poor child! she had no pastor.

Towards the close of her twelfth year, Ida became really ill. Her short walk became daily shorter, and more fatiguing, until at length it was given up altogether. Her mother and

Thérèse watched her with trembling anxiety, hoping against hope that she would soon get stronger. "Her cough," they would say, "was not so very bad after all." Ah! it is in vain! Kind friends may watch, and pray, and hope, but death has long marked Ida Mornington—the beautiful—the beloved—the only surviving child of a widowed mother—and she must die. And is Ida ready *now*? As she lay one morning on her couch, she said to Thérèse :—

"I have been thinking so much to-day of a dream that I had two years ago, and which I have never forgotten."

"But, you know it is wrong and superstitious to think about dreams. You must try to forget it."

"Ah! but that dream I could never forget; and it seemed to have a meaning. In the Scriptures, we read of many people who had dreams."

"Yes, but I was always taught that we are to place no dependence upon idle dreams."

"Who taught you, Thérèse, for you were an orphan from your infancy?"

Thérèse hesitated and coloured; she never liked to speak to Ida about her early life. At length, she said, "I was placed in a good school, where I was taught all that was necessary for

my journey to Heaven, by holy women. And we were all constantly instructed by good pastors.

"Well," sighed Ida, "I only know, I wish I had one of the pastors I saw in my dream on the narrow road, who fed the pilgrims with that 'Holy Bread,' and as they neared their journey's end and grew weary, applied some holy oil that sustained and strengthened them so marvellously that they did not faint, but reached the Glorious City at last. I think the City meant Heaven, and the 'Holy Bread,' Holy Communion, which Mrs. Maitland, who gave me this cross"—and she kissed it tenderly—"said she received very often. The 'holy oil,' I have been thinking," she added, after a long pause, "is that mentioned by St. James. Are some people anointed with that oil now, Therèse?"

"Yes, and always have been when dying, from the time the command was given."

"O! how I should like one of those good pastors to come to me, and give me 'The Bread of Life,' and anoint me with the holy oil, for I am sick—sick unto death," and she fixed her large blue eyes with a long, wistful gaze upon Therèse, who now wept bitterly. "Oh, do not weep so; mamma will always take care of you—

you have been so good to me. I only wish you had a pastor : for now that I am dying, I feel I want what he alone can give me. Let us both pray that God may send one to us."

Thérèse now sobbed more violently than ever. At length making an effort to rouse herself, she said, sinking on her knees, an "Our Father," adding afterwards, in a faint whisper, a prayer she had learned in childhood, and which never seemed so sweet to her as now.

She had scarcely finished, when Mrs. Mornington, who had been breathlessly listening in an adjoining room to the foregoing conversation, came in. Agony of mind was depicted in every feature ; she could not speak ; but bending over the child, whom she now felt certain she must lose, she kissed her burning forehead, and making a sign to Therese to follow her, hurried to her own room.

" O Thérèse !" she said, when they were alone, and clasping her hands, " what have I heard ? Oh ! you who have loved her, kneel and pray with me that God may spare our darling, if only for a few years longer. Oh ! I cannot part with her—she is the *last*!" And the poor heart-broken mother writhed in her dreadful agony—the agony of uncontrollable, unsanctified grief.

"My dear, kind mistress!" said Therèse, "do not give way so: it is sinful; indeed it is."

"Sinful to plead for my child's life!" replied Mrs. Mornington; "sinful to weep!" looking wildly at her maid. "Oh, Therèse! but I forgot, you have never known a mother's love. But what did Ida say about a pastor? If she must——" She could not go on.

"Why she must mean, dear madam, a pastor such as I have you know. Oh! how often I have bitterly repented of the rash promise I made to you never to speak about religion to your dear child; but it is not too late now, if you will hear me. She cannot last long: the doctor told me so this morning, and begged me to break the sad news to you. Now, will you let me send for Mr. Grantly? He can give her the 'Holy Bread,' and anoint her with the holy oil of which you heard her speak, and I can assure you, if it should not lengthen her life, it will be an unspeakable comfort to her."

For a few moments, Mrs. Mornington looked doubtfully at Therèse; then her eye fell on the picture of St. Gabriel, and as if a sudden thought struck her, she said musingly, "Ah! I remember!" and turning to Therèse, she bade her go herself at once for Mr. Grantly.

For more than an hour Mrs. Mornington sat

by her dying child, who had fallen asleep during her absence. Who but that poor mother, who had seen five victims of the same fatal disease pass to that "bourne from whence no traveller returns," would have believed that that sleeping girl would soon, also, pass away for ever! Roses—fatal roses—were on her cheeks, and their hollowness, which had lately so alarmed her friends, was partly concealed by the long fair hair, which, likewise, covered the wasted hands that were crossed upon her breast. The rosy lips were slightly parted; now and then she spoke—she was evidently dreaming. "Is he coming, Therèse? No! I must go into the narrow road!" Then, with a sigh, "I've no strength." O that long, long hour! would it ever end? The setting sun illumined the room. Poor mother! would it rise again on her child in life? Poor earth-bound mother! She dreamed not of the bliss in store for her and her beloved one: she heard not the quiet step on the richly-carpeted floor: she saw not the tall form that knelt at the foot of the couch, nor the compassionate look that was bent on herself and child. At length she sank on her knees, and, burying her face in her hands, she said, in a low, husky voice, "I cannot bear this! It is too much."

"He who bore a heavier cross for you will enable you to bear it, if you ask Him," said the stranger.

"Who speaks?" said Mrs. Mornington and Ida, who had just awoke, at the same moment.

The stranger arose and apologised for his intrusion, saying, "Thérèse had begged him to hasten to a sick person, and that the servant who had opened the door had shown him into the room."

"Oh!" said Ida, "are you one of the good shepherds I saw in my dream?"

"I am a *true* shepherd, I hope, for I have many sheep under my care in the 'One Fold,' into which I trust soon to receive two more," said the stranger, looking at Ida, and then at her poor mother, who still knelt beside her child's couch.

"Can you save her life?" said Mrs. Mornington, without raising her head.

"No, madam," replied Mr. Grantly,—for it was he—"but I can shew her the way by which she may save what is far more precious—her immortal soul."

Ida looked beseechingly at her mother.

"I see what you wish, dear child," and Mrs. Mornington arose, and, bowing to Mr. Grantly,

left the room. In about half-an-hour Mr. Grantly rang the bell, and requested to see Mrs. Mornington before he left the house.

"Your daughter has been baptized, I suppose?" said he inquiringly.

"You ask a strange question, sir," said Mrs. Mornington, proudly.

"But a very necessary one, dear madam. You are probably not aware how many persons, even in your rank of life, and amongst members of the Church of England are not baptized. Amongst Dissenters and the poorer classes, the number of unbaptized persons is fearfully large. Of course you know that Christ said 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of God?'"

Mrs. Mornington trembled violently, and clasping her hands, she said, "O may God forgive me! my child is *not* baptized."

"God mercifully pardons all who seek for forgiveness in the Sacrament, which He instituted for that purpose. But we will speak of this another time. I will call on the doctor, and, if necessary, I will return and baptize your child at once. In the meantime pray for the grace of God, and for pardon." The last words were said slowly and solemnly, and as he left the room Mrs. Mornington's tears fell fast, but

they were blessed tears now—tears of deep repentance for her sins.

Ida had been born on her passage from the West Indies, where her father had died. There was no clergyman on board who could baptize the child, and when Mrs. Mornington reached England, the *real necessity* of baptism never occurred to her, otherwise the “christening” would have been a matter of course. Her whole soul was absorbed in the thought of saving the life of this last, and therefore, especially beloved child; but the soul was forgotten. There is no true love without the grace of God.

CHAPTER V.

THE CROSS. THE WHITE GARMENT. THE LAMP.

“Oh! mamma,” said Ida to her mother, when Mrs. Mornington returned to her room, “I have a cross now; I have had one a long time without knowing it. It is leaving you alone”—and she looked sorrowfully at her mother. “But I shall be able to bear it better when I have received the white garment, and the ‘Bread of Life,’ and you will too, mamma; and we shall both be so happy, eternally happy, when we have been parted for a little while.”

“My child, I have sinned greatly, and against you especially. With all my love for you, I have been fearfully selfish, and negligent regarding your immortal soul. Forgive me and pray for me!”

“O, mamma! do not reproach yourself; it is I who am to blame. For at least two years, if not longer, God has been calling me to walk in

the narrow road, and to ‘take up my cross,’ and I have turned away, and sought for pleasures in the broad road, but I sought in vain. Each day, as I grew weaker and weaker, I tried to shun the thought of parting from you—of the dark grave—of the judgment—yes, of all that concerned my soul ; and, young as I am, I have long been old enough to be responsible for it. God did not leave me without a silent witness within me that I was not walking in the narrow road, the *only* road to the Glorious City which lies beyond this fleeting world. The Scriptures taught me that there were but two roads, the narrow and the broad, the right and the wrong one ; that at the Judgment Day there would be the sheep and the goats, and I knew that I could not be amongst the sheep, for I had no shepherd, and I was not in the ‘one fold.’ I knew I must be amongst the travellers on the broad road.”

“ Then how much more culpable I must have been during the long years of my wasted life,” said Mrs. Mornington, and she trembled as she thought of many narrow escapes she had had from a sudden and unprovided death. She felt certain too, from a conversation she had lately had with an old nurse of her own, that she herself had not been baptized. Yet strange it was,

she neglected to ask at once for the Sacrament, without which she could not be saved.

"Ah! dear, dear mamma," said Ida, "I should be indeed ungrateful if I could believe you had ever done me any wrong. God will bless you for all your love and kindness, and I feel so hopeful about our meeting again in the Glorious City."

Mrs. Mornington was obliged to leave the room to conceal her deep emotion, and sent Therèse to take her place by Ida's couch.

"O Therèse! how can I thank you for bringing that good pastor to me! Will he come early to-morrow?"

"Yes; and you will soon receive the white garment, but you must not talk any more just now."

"Only a few words, dear Therèse. Will you ask mamma when I am gone, to put a cross on my grave, not a Maltese—a Roman Cross; and will you pray for me then? I heard you, one night, praying for a poor old woman, after her death, and in the morning I had heard Mrs. Maitland say to a friend, 'It is a wholesome thing to pray for the dead.'"

"I promise," sobbed Therèse, and then as Ida fell asleep, with one hand clasped in hers, she thought of her rash promise to Mrs. Morning-

ton never to speak about religion to her young charge. "Serious things," said her mother, "might injure her health, and there would be time enough by-and-bye." Such is the usual argument against training the immortal soul. And yet Mrs. Mornington would allow her child to read, *unaided*, that mysterious book, which but for the mercy of God, and much that was practical in her character, might have rendered her, had she lived longer, either a gloomy visionary, or a sceptic.

Mr. Grantly came early the next morning, and remained long with Ida, gently instructing her in the doctrines necessary to salvation: clearly explaining to her all that had so puzzled her in reading the Scriptures. He spent some time also with Mrs. Mornington, who was now most penitent and anxious for instruction.

"Surely, my child," said Mr. Grantly, "you must have seen the necessity of the Sacraments, even if you only admitted the two administered in the Church of England, to which you nominally belonged."

"Not so clearly as you may suppose, for my parents were Unitarians; and it was only after my marriage with Captain Mornington that I attended the church—and I seldom went."

"Oh, yes," sighed Mr. Grantly, "you were

not in the church which compels its members, on pain of mortal sin, to assist at the ‘Daily Sacrifice’ on all Sundays and days of obligation, or you would have known the necessity, not merely of Baptism, but of the Holy Eucharist, ‘Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye shall not have life in you’—of the Sacrament of Penance also, whereby the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven. And our blessed Lord ordained this Sacrament when He breathed on His apostles, and said, ‘Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.’” (John xv. 23.)

“Yes,” said Mrs. Mornington, “I see it all now, thank God!”

In a few days, with the assistance of Therèse, the new converts were quite prepared for the Sacraments of Penance and Baptism. And as Ida received the cross, the white garment, and the lamp, she looked so radiant, that an inexperienced nurse might have said she would live for years.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GLORIOUS CITY.

“Glorious things are said of thee, O City of God.”

THE next night, awaking from a long sleep, Ida asked for the good pastor, as she still called Mr. Grantly.

“Mamma—Thérèse!” she said, looking at them with a bright smile, “I have seen the Glorious City, and some of the pilgrims had carried their white garments, without stain, before the Throne. And I saw the Crucified One with five wounds—all bright, and His Sacred Heart on fire with love. Oh! how I long to go! You, too, will long soon.”

Exhausted with the effort she had made, she lay for some time quite still. Her mother knelt beside her, while Thérèse was quietly preparing a little altar, placing a crucifix, lights, and fresh flowers upon it. Presently the door opened, and Mr. Grantly entered with the Blessed

Sacrament, placing it reverently on the altar, together with the holy oil.

"He is come," whispered Therèse, and Ida, who was supported by pillows, bent her head reverently as well as she could, making the sign of the cross; but they thought she would never speak again.

Mrs. Mornington did not raise her head. We will not attempt to fathom the depths of that tried soul;—"There is joy among the angels over one sinner doing penance."

The Last Sacrament—the anointing with oil—was administered to the dying girl, and the "Bread of Life," for which she had so longed, was given to her. Then she lay quite quiet, while the "good pastor," for whose guidance she had so pined in life, knelt beside her now, as she neared her journey's end, and prayed for her safe passage through the dark valley of the shadow of death. Therèse knelt at the foot of the couch, and prayed, too—deep, penitential prayers for forgiveness for her rash promise, and that the soul of her beloved charge might be taken now, in the strength and purity of the Last Sacraments. The sun was just rising, and its rays fell on the face of Ida, illuminating it with an unearthly brightness. She cast one look on her almost-unconscious mother, and then one

on her faithful Therèse, who had risen from her knees, and was supporting her in her arms, then, casting a look of intense gratitude on Mr. Grantly, with a radiant smile, her large blue eyes rested on the eastern window of the room, and she said, faintly, but distinctly, "One, two, three—Jesus, Joseph, Mary—they are come!"

"May the Lord remit to thee, through the most Sacred Mysteries of man's redemption, the pains of the present and future life; open to thee the gates of Paradise, and bring thee to everlasting joys. May God Almighty bless thee!—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen;" said Mr. Grantly, solemnly.

"No cross now," faintly murmured Therèse; "the white garment!—the palm!—the crown!" The blue eyes closed—the narrow road was at an end, and "the soul was at home with its God;" and

"Still, wherever Thou dost bend
Thy lovely steps, O glorious King!
Virgins upon Thy steps attend,
And hymns to Thy high glory sing."

* * * * *

Three years have slowly passed away, and Sister Mary of the Cross, in her white habit, kneels in her cell in the convent of the "Good Shepherd." The silver heart rests upon her

breast—a blue girdle encircles her waist. She looks pale and thin, for much suffering has been hers. The “narrow road” has been indeed rough, and “her feet have often well-nigh slipped,” but some good pastor has been ever near, and, by his help, she has tried to keep her garment white and her lamp burning, and to bear her cross bravely. She has, that morning, together with a lay sister, pronounced the vows that have espoused her to the Crucified One, and her life is devoted to bringing lost sheep into His Fold. In the Glorious City angels are rejoicing—their Queen is pleading—blue eyes are smiling—the narrow road will soon be past!

“ Rest comes at length, though life be long and dreary ;
The day must dawn, and darksome night be past ;
All journeys end in welcomes to the weary,
And Heaven—the heart’s true home—is reached at last.”

THE END.

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Washbourne's Free and Easy Steel Pens, Fine, Middle, or Broad Points, 1s. gross.

Good Quill Pens, 3s. 6d. per 100.

Blotting Paper, Pink or White, 1s. 6d. per quire, 27s. per ream.

See also *Stationery Catalogue*, published separately.

ROSARIES.

	doz.	gross.		doz.	gross.
Dark Red	1/0	9/0	Black	2/6	22/6
Natural	1/2	10/6	Natural	3/6	31/6
Brown	1/2	10/6	Large Black	4/0	36/0
Black	1/5	13/0	White Bone	6/0	54/0
Red	1/8	15/0	Red Bone	6/0	54/0
Brown.	2/0	18/0	Large Red Bone	8/0	72/0
Larger	2/6	22/6	Red Bone and Steel 8/0	8/0	72/0

MEDALS.

Immaculate Conception	in.	gross.	Salvator Mundi	1 1/4 by 1	13/6
	1 by 1 1/4	3/6	S. Joseph and		
Ditto.	1 1/4 by 1 1/4	3/9 & 6/	Angel Guardian	1 1/4 by 1 1/4	18/0
Ditto.	1 by 1 1/4	4/6	Passionist	1 1/4 in.	2/8
Ditto.	1 1/4 by 1	13/6	Benedictine	1 1/4 by 1 1/4	18/0
Sacred Heart	1 by 1 1/4	8/0	<i>Particulars of others in Supplementary Catalogue.</i>		
Ditto.	1 1/4 by 1	13/6			

Brass Crosses, 1s., 2s., and 3s. per dozen.

1s. Frames for Pictures, 6d. each, or 4s. 6d. per dozen.

Ditto, Larger and handsomer, 1s. each, or 9s. per dozen.



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